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**Exploring the Value to the Individual of Access
To Digitised Visual Art (DVA)
Within a Community**

Heather Robson

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Northumbria University
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Research undertaken in the Division of Information Studies
School of Computing, Engineering and Information Sciences**

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Abstract

This research focused upon issues associated with access to Digitised Visual Art (DVA) that is Visual Art in any form that is held and made available as a shared electronic resource; the value to the individual from the experience of such access and the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in offering a new space to visual art and the individual user. Within the overarching framework of the learning society this study was designed to gain an understanding of the way in which individuals use and value access to DVA within their everyday life. It had a particular emphasis on the individual's own construction of value and the concept of a '*new space*'.

This study relied on the hermeneutic perspective of a shared meaning and understanding. Hermeneutics was both the underpinning philosophy and the specific framework and method for analysis and interpretation. Design of the research was emergent employing a user centred approach; meaning was determined by the context of the study, *new space*. This offered the researcher the opportunity to use methods that would yield rich data including on-line and email interviews - actual tools in *new space*. Key to this research was the relationships between the individual, *new space* and visual art. Hypertext is concerned with relationships and it is for this reason that an electronic hypertext document (EHD) was created as a holistic tool to present an electronic version of the research. The development of the EHD has become the basis to begin further research in the pedagogical application of such technology as a research and teaching tool.

Gateshead, Tyne and Wear in the North East of England was chosen as a case study site, in particular the Library and Arts Service. This study provides an insight into the vision and foresight that Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council has placed on learning, culture, arts and the Information Society. This research also provides a discourse and insight into the utility and importance of DVA and the benefit and opportunity afforded by access in a *new space*. It offers an understanding of the meaning of Culture in the context of the research and interpretation of value advocating a meaningful framework in which value can be discussed.

Abstract

Heather Robson February 2007

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Author's Declaration

No component of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of any other application for another qualification, for this or any other University or institute of learning, and that it is all my own work.

Heather Robson. February 2007

Statement of Ethics

All participants were informed prior to the commencement of the research of its nature and purpose. A statement of confidentiality was made explicit ensuring each participant of his or her anonymity.

In gaining access to case study one; the site, the purpose of the study, relevance and period of fieldwork was fully explained. Key informants were kept up to date throughout the period of fieldwork.

With regard to case study two, a statement of purpose, guaranteeing anonymity was clearly displayed to all participants before their activity on the website.

Preface

The electronic hypertext document (EHD) that accompanies this thesis has been produced and structured in the form of a website. The website mirrors the paper version of the thesis, but incorporates additional features and functions including hyperlinks and bookmarks allowing the reader to move between chapters, data sets, external resources and pursue themes and links within the text, thus providing a dynamic presentation of the research.

Hypertext has the ability to demonstrate graphically the relationships that are evident in and have emerged from the research supporting the reading of and access to the thesis by making these relationships and the linkages that exist in the print version of the thesis, e.g. the literature, methodology, analysis and findings, dynamic.

The methodological approach determined that the natural environment (*new space*) be experienced directly and that data collection, analysis and interpretation should all occur within that specific context. The EHD permits a dynamic audit trail of data, methods and analysis whilst also offering the reader, when viewed online, access to those resources that were consulted in support of the research (Mason, 2000).


The research explored and identified those opportunities that are offered by such electronic resources, and their potential not only to the individual in question but also as a tool for academic research, thus requiring the researcher to demonstrate such potential in the presentation of the EHD. Presenting an electronic hypertext version of the research raises the questions of electronic resources and their role within qualitative research and the pedagogical applications of technology.

The EHD can be accessed from the enclosed CD-ROM using a Personal Computer (PC) and read on screen. The EHD is best viewed using a browser that supports frames e.g. Internet Explorer 3+. It is recommended that the reader follow the natural links that occur within the body of the texts to explore

the space, relationships, reflections, decisions and the emergent research design, as they wish.

A menu structure is provided reflecting the content structure of the thesis for a more traditional reading and quick linking to chapters. The reading is not dependent on Internet access, however if read on screen using a PC with access to the Internet the reading experience is considerably enhanced.

Using the EHD:

- **Blue bold text** identifies an internal link.
- External links are identified by the globe symbol  and open in an external window observing copyright.

References:

Mason, J (2000) *From Gutenberg's Galaxy to Cyberspace: The Transforming Power of Electronic Hypertext*. Doctoral Dissertation at McGill University. Available at: <http://www2.norwich.edu/mkabay/overviews/anonpseudo.htm> [Accessed September 2004].

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Key Words

Digitised Visual Art

Hermeneutics

Heuristic

Hypertext

Lifelong Learning

new space

The Individual

Value

Abbreviations

CCC:	Centre for Creative Communities
CLMG	Campaign for Learning in Museums and Galleries
CMC:	Computer Mediated Communication
DCMS:	Department of Culture Media and Sport
DVA:	Digitised Visual Art
EHD:	Electronic Hypertext Document
GMBC:	Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
GLAS:	Gateshead Library and Arts Service
HTML:	Hypertext Mark-Up Language
HTTP:	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
ICTs:	Information and Communication Technologies
LA:	Library Association
LIC:	Library and Information Commission
LLL:	Lifelong Learning
MDA:	Museum Documentation Association
MGC:	Museums and Galleries Commission
MLA	Museums, Libraries and Archives
MLAC:	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
NCA:	National Campaign for the Arts
NI:	Northern Informatics
NOF:	New Opportunities Fund
PAT:	Policy Action Team
PC:	Personal Computer
RIS:	Regional Information Service
The Web:	World Wide Web
WWW:	World Wide Web

Tables and Diagrams

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research

"It's incredible. There is no doubt about the potential of this technology. This technology changes the world forever" (Samuel, 2003).

This research developed from the researcher's own personal encounter with visual art and *new space* and her desire to share that experience by exploring the potential of *new space* and the individual's own encounter within that space. It is appropriate to lead with this personal statement as the chosen hermeneutic framework for method and analysis employed is built upon the interpretation of the shared meaning and practices that as human beings we have for our experiences within a specific context (Maloney, 1993). The research was designed to answer the question *"What is the value to an individual of having access to Digitised Visual Art (DVA) within a community space?"* Advances in technology and media offer the possibility of a *new space* for visual art and the individual.

This *new space* is made up of two distinct components, firstly a *physical* community space, which could be a library or a gallery, and secondly a virtual space e.g. the World Wide Web (the Web). In themselves these spaces are not new but it is the coming together of these two spaces, the physical and the virtual to create the concept of a *new space* that is central to this research.

DVA was defined as being visual art in any form that is held and made available as an electronic resource. Visual art can include *sculpture, painting, drawing, textile, collage, cartoon, and installation* but not exhaustively. Digitisation is defined as a work that has been copied into a digital format but not to exclude images that are held in any other electronic form.

1.1: Aim of the Research

The research presents two case studies to demonstrate within the wider concept of the Learning Society an understanding of the value to the

individual of such access to DVA in *new space*. Towards this end a framework of three aims and eleven specific objectives were established to guide the focus of the research and identify elements and themes of the concept of value.

Aims:

1. To explore the relationship between the provision of access to DVA and the ethos of lifelong learning.
2. To explore the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in offering a *new space* to the individual and visual art within the community.
3. Provide insight into the use and provision of access to DVA within this *new space* and the personal meaning derived.

These aims were met through the fulfilment of the eleven specific objectives.

1.2: Objectives

In respect of Lifelong Learning:

1. Explore the definition of learning as a life process, distinguishing between the differing strata, e.g. education, experience and leisure.
2. Identify the potential of crossover of visual art into learning.
3. Investigate, within the context of DVA, the concept of learning as a societal function.

In respect of ICTs contributing to the *new space*:

4. Examine the role of the public and community providers e.g. libraries, museums, galleries, in the provision of DVA to the individual and community.
5. Investigate the *new space* for DVA as one facet underpinning a growing network of resources.
6. Explore the innovation of the *new space* for DVA in relation to the development of the cultural and social in everyday life.

7. Explore what motivates the individual to seek access to DVA within this *new space* and its relevance to the individual.

In respect of effective use and provision of access within the *new space*:

8. Identify the current level of provision of DVA.
9. Explore the concept of access and the barriers encountered.
10. Identify these barriers as perceived and understood by the individual and the providers.
11. Examine the role of the public and community providers in supporting users to overcome the barriers to access.

Essentially the aims and objectives focussed upon individuals who use computers in a community space to seek and look at visual art; the issues associated with access to digitised visual art, why individuals use and seek access to such resources, *informal places of learning* and the value to the individual of the experience of such access and the individual's own construction of value.

1.3: References

Maloney, M. (1993). *Silent strength: A Heideggerian hermeneutical analysis of the stories of older women*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Georgia State University, Atlanta in Byrne, M. M. Hermeneutics. Available at:
http://www.coe.uga.edu/quig/proceedings/Quig98_Proceedings/byrne.html
[Accessed September 2004].

Samuel, J (2003), *Changing the World Forever; What E-mail and Internet Means for 14 Christian Aid local Partners in Asia*. Available at:
<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/indepth/312changing/websites.pdf> [Accessed September 2004].

Chapter 2: The Individual and *new space*

2.1: Introduction

The British Government believes that community access to art offers the opportunity for empowerment of the individual and the regeneration of the community (DCMS, 1999). The continual advances in technology and digital media have created the possibility of a *new space* for visual art and the individual (COE, 1997). The growth and realisation of this *new space* is assisted by the Government's commitment to facilitate the learning society by the use of ICTs making access for all implicit. This *new space* allows art to become an [inter] active information source.

The discourse surrounding visual representation has moved to a central position, this shift, a "pictorial turn", (Mitchell, 1994 in Woodrow, 2000) has revived discussion of the pictorial placing emphasis on the image as visual information. Visual art information is intended to be understood visually,

*"just as text, a work of art embodies or contains a concept...the study of art focuses upon both art objects and art in **reproduction**, as containers of information"* (Bell, 1993, p3). (Researcher's emphasis).

Tague-Suitcliff (1995) identifies information as an intangible dependent upon the belief and understanding of the individual. Records containing words or images are tangibles but they contain information relative only to the individual (Tague-Suitcliff, 1995 in Saracevic & Kantor, 1997). This research sought a holistic understanding of the process of access to DVA by the individual within his or her own community. It did not attempt to ascertain an aesthetic appraisal of the DVA resources nor did it aim to measure their information worth. Rather it endeavoured to gain insight into why individuals seek access to, the subsequent use of and integration into their lives of DVA resources.

2.2: The Individual

Historically visual art has been perceived by some as an elitist preoccupation, art academies developing from within to generate a hierarchy of art, while museums and art galleries have presented themselves as exclusive 'temples' to art. Munson (1997) suggests that these 'temples' many of which were built in a classical architectural style facilitated a transformation from the everyday activity to a higher sphere in the contemplation of art through their physical construction. Many traditional art galleries and museums require the visitor on entry or within the building to climb grand staircases and this Munson (1997) claims to be a metaphor for the

"effort required to reach a state of knowledge" (Munson, 1997).

The issue of widening access to museums and galleries is of concern to the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) and the British Government Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS), in breaking down barriers to access such as

"perceptions of museums as irrelevant or elitist" (DCMS, 1999).

Visual art has an important role to play in society, namely the understanding of the world through images. Visual art is a source of information, not only for academic purposes, but also as a contributor of historical and social comment. A work of art is created or produced in specific [and in response to] social and cultural circumstances. Developing the proficiency of [cultural] critical discussion is a transferable skill used in everyday decision-making.

"A work of art is relevant if it expresses new insights into reality or if it embodies an interesting and profound moral or political vision"
(Ahleberg, 1999).

In a study carried out by the National Federation for Educational Research (1995), on behalf of the National Campaign for the Arts (NCA), life-enhancing qualities of the arts both in education and leisure activities were identified. Of the participants surveyed two-thirds suggested positive effects, citing such aspects as *"increase in self-confidence, sociability, and motivation"* (NCA,

1999). Raising the issue of access to the arts, NCA identified that attitudes developed at

“formative stages can stand in the way of appreciation of the arts for a lifetime” (NCA, 1999).

Increasing motivation towards [visual] art requires the breaking down of prejudice by encouragement through participation. Realising as the DCMS (1999) have through the Policy Action Team 10 Report (PAT 10) *Art & Sport: A Report to the Social Exclusion Unit*, that content of a local nature encourages use therefore in considering the provision of resources such as DVA, local authorities must have a key role in providing strategic access to digitised visual art. Content focused on the locale generates a sense of identity for the community and individual, with the potential to foster a life long appreciation and use of [visual] art.

*“The sense of increased understanding, of deepened intelligibility resulting from aesthetic experience, has led philosophic theorists to treat **art** as a mode of knowledge superior not only to that of ordinary life, but that of science itself” (Lewitsky, 1989).*

(Researcher's emphasis).

Resource, formerly the UK council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (and once again known as Museums Libraries and Archives Council, MLAC 2004) maintain that museums, archives and libraries are central to people's lives, contributing to learning, society, culture and the economy (Resource, 2001).

The strategic research priorities of the former MLAC (1999) aimed to ensure that

“museums, libraries and archives are known to and widely used by all as key resources for creativity, lifelong learning, economic development and enjoyment” (Shepherd, 1999 p.4.1).

Development of this research programme was to come from *“the vision it sought to make real”* (Shepherd, 1999 p.4.2) i.e. the national resource of information held in libraries, archives, museum and gallery collections being

made accessible to a wider range of users. This accessibility refers not only to traditional means within the institutions but also by the use of ICTs to create and propagate visual resources (Shepherd, 1999). A key theme and outcome of *Resource's* research priorities was learning and access, with the aim of enabling improved access and quality of the experience to the 'customer' (Resource, 2001).

The PAT 10 report (DCMS, 1999) identified the significance of art to a community and the individual. In that community access to art offers the opportunity for regeneration of a community and the empowerment of the individual. The DCMS acknowledged that participation should be inclusive, art should not be seen as an "*add on [but] fundamental to community involvement*" (DCMS, 1999). The benefits as a spectator or a consumer of art are considered to be "*personal inspiration, insight, community identity and pride*" (DCMS, 1999). The report also identified that social exclusion occurs in groups irrespective of their geographical position, and that such individuals and communities would benefit from direct engagement in art activities whilst acknowledging the diversity of each individual.

Traditional [physical] access to visual art requires the viewer, spectator, consumer, individual to enter the 'unfamiliar' world of art. *new space* and media allows art the opportunity to enter the world of the viewer in the literal sense, bringing access into their world, their community and empowering individuals to become users (Robson and Dixon, 2001). The challenge is to enable these users to become active users in *new space* (Dempsey, 2000), whilst acknowledging that individuals need meaningful access in the broadest terms to participate (COE, 1997).

The ethos of the learning society extends the opportunity for empowerment to the community and the individual within. All individuals exist within some form of societal community. The structure of this community may come from common residence or interest. In agreement with Crow and Allen

"there is no doubt that the communities of which we are members play a significant role in shaping our social identities and patterns of action" (Crow and Allan, 1994, p.1).

2.3: new space

The rapid and continued advances in technology are producing a time of unprecedented change within the information environment. Allied with the British Government's vision and development of a society of lifelong learning, electronic networks of learning and life-enhancing resources are becoming increasingly available.

In 1997 in association with the then named Arts Council of England an international seminar *The Artist, The Citizen The Entrepreneur* was held. In reporting back to the Council of Europe (COE) the report recognised that digital media and technology created an *innovative new cultural space* that could be developed within communities and the individual's everyday life. Seminar proceedings also recognised that citizens would need a

"new space and meaningful access to participate" (COE, 1997).

Such developments in technology and the government's commitment to facilitate the learning society by Information and Communication Technology (ICTs), making access for all implicit, aids the growth and realisation of this *new space*.

Figure 1 page 12 provides an overview of the research i.e. the concept of *new space* which is defined within the context of the Learning Society in terms of the individual and the potential opportunities of learning and participation within the community and is made up of two distinct components, the **physical** (space) and the **virtual** (space). The physical space can be a *library, gallery, coffee shop, school, place of work, home or community centre* that provides networked access to resources. The virtual space is the *World Wide Web* (the Web) or *network environment* where DVA resources are held and made available as a shared resource.

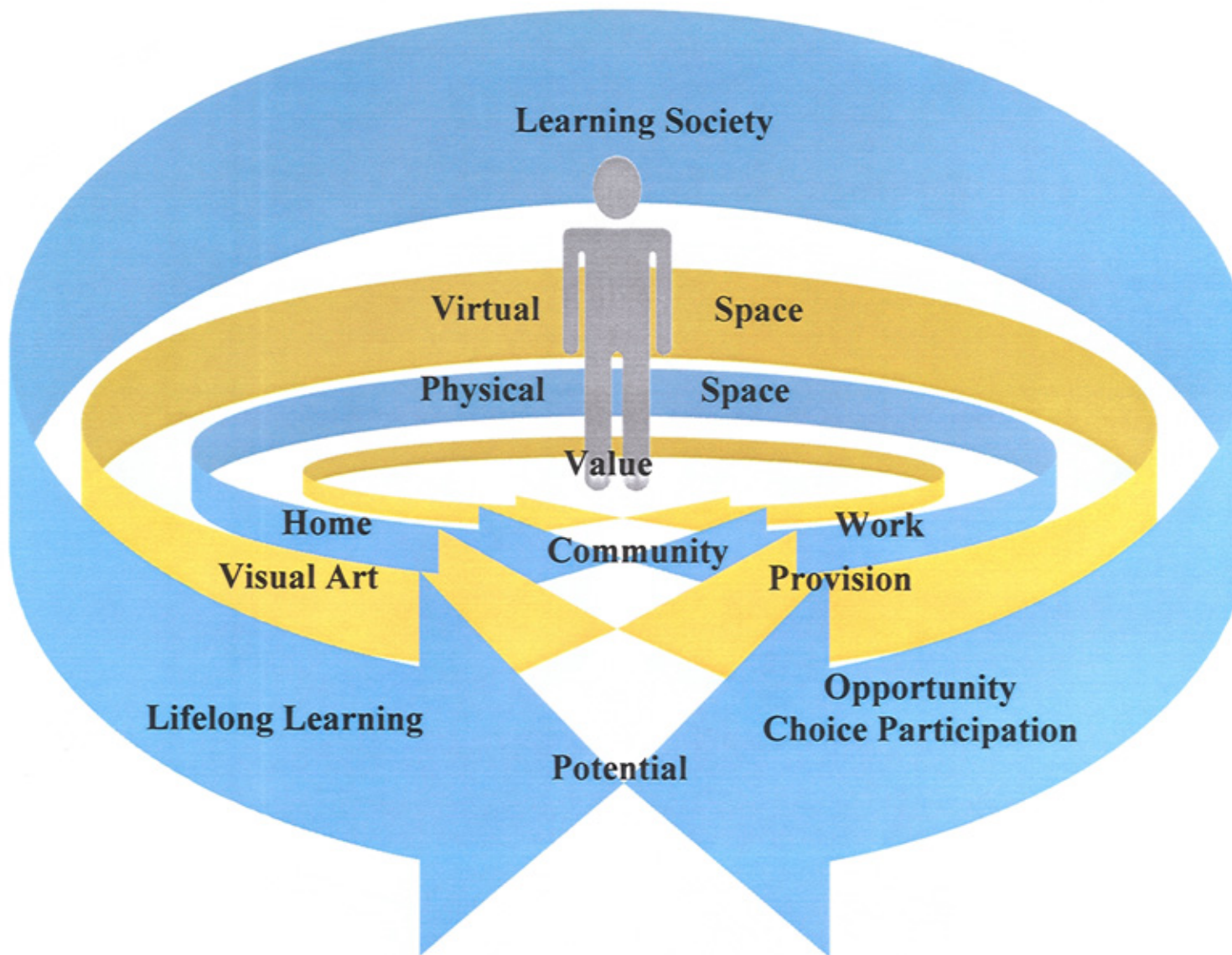


Figure 1: Overview of the Research
The Individual and *new space*

The relationship (Figure II) between these spaces, the physical space and the virtual space, the individual and DVA are in a constant state of flux. The very nature of the medium denies barriers and boundaries and it is the individual who can shape the nature of the space both physical and virtual.

The inter-relationships that develop between the space-people-art remain, independent of the location of the physical space. Understanding these relationships and why individuals seek access to these *new spaces* and the subsequent and continuing use of particular resources were key to the study.

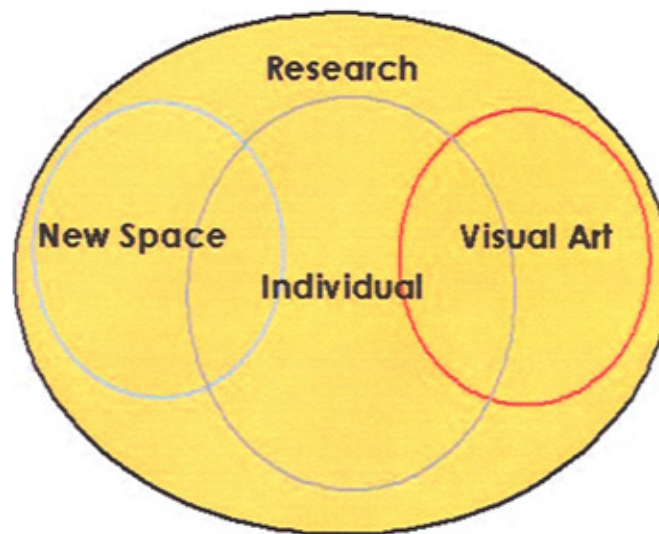


Figure II: Research Relationship Variables

Question:

How does the individual interact with visual art in this *new space* in order to maximise its potential?

If *new space* and media allows art to enter the world of the viewer in the literal sense, bringing access into their world the community and empowering individuals to become users the research must ask:

Who are the users in this *new space*? How does DVA enter the user's everyday life and the community in which they participate?

John Cooper's investigation into *Relevance, Participation and Motivation in Hypermedia Design* (1993) describes the interaction between the [museum]

visitor and the exhibit as a meeting of tendril type threads emitting from the viewer and the exhibit. The viewer's threads are **looped** at the end representing the viewer's *interests, meaning and life experiences*. The exhibit emits the same tendril like threads, which are **hooked** at the end. Traditionally these hooks represent *aesthetics, art history, social history and technique* (Cooper, 1993). The hooks seek out a loop hoping to engage the viewer in interaction. Cooper observes that a connection between loops and hooks may never occur. However if additional threads could be drawn from the exhibit then a connection with a viewer's loop may be possible. These additional threads Cooper identifies to be indirect [to the exhibit] and relevant to the visitor's world.

"Types of playful, absurd questions bring the art work/exhibit into the visitor's own world, rather than attempting to achieve the reverse" (Cooper, 1993).

Question:

How can additional threads and interest hooks be added without an understanding of the visitor, viewer, spectator, consumer, individual?

The research had a particular emphasis on the individual's own construction of value, informal places of learning and the inter-relationships that develop in these 'informal places'. Therefore the research was not only governed by the research objectives but guided by the study of the concept of value and its meaning to the individual.

2.4: Introduction to Value

In the report *Performance Management in Local Government*, Rogers (1999) comments that value is complex in relation to the delivery of services and public policy making calling for 'soft-judgement' as well as quantitative measurement. The real question Rogers maintains is *who's value will count and in what context will it be regarded as best?* (Rogers, 1999). Within this study value, as understood by each individual and his or her own unique construction of that value, is based on the fundamental understanding that

there is no value/knowledge independent of that meaning constructed and attributed to an experience by the individual or community (Badenoch et al, 1994; Hein, 1996; Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994; Mukerjee, 1964; Taylor, 1982).

The underlying premise is that value resides uniquely within each individual, and is attributed by the individual in specific context. The individual through an experience or event within his or her own life attributes value. Early exploration into the value concept has shown that this attribution does not exist nor is it created in isolation, but is a social construct. Individuals come together to share, communicate and express their own value experience (Badenoch et al; 1994; Dewey, 1958; Mukerjee, 1964; O'Sullivan, 1994; Thomas and Znaniecki, 1958). This experience is dependent upon the individual, the uniqueness of the '*human making*' (Budd, 1995).

Value therefore can be determined as a social construct, a shared belief that varies according to the individual and differing contexts. There are many value types as defined in Figure III and each within a specific context can be realised in a number of dimensions. These value types and dimensions inevitably intersect, overlap and merge.



Figure III: Value Types

For the purposes of this study, value can be determined as being generated not by the object, in this case DVA itself, but by the experience i.e. the holistic process [of access to DVA] within a specific context [the individual's community space]. This differs from that which is usually considered in the field of art i.e. it is the work of art, which holds an intrinsic aesthetic value. A failing in traditional aesthetics is the pre-occupation of the eulogisation of beauty or the singling out of all other aesthetic qualities in favour of one. The discourse surrounding aestheticism identifies art to be appreciated for its aesthetic merit and requires no justification. The focus on formal qualities can instil elitism in the process of the encounter with art assuming knowledge of the institution, aesthetics and a standard of taste.

To apply a purely aesthetic value to the experience of DVA would not permit an holistic understanding of the value experience of access to DVA. The aesthetic value is only one element or factor that contributes to the value as a whole. The aesthetic element must be stretched to cover everything that is conceivable of value in DVA whilst acknowledging that DVA has values that are not aesthetic (Berleant, 1970; Budd, 1995; Welsch, 1998).

Walter Benjamin's (1935) discourse surrounding the technology of cinema and photography as creators of a true mass culture and John Berger's (1972) 'Ways of Seeing' based on Benjamin's work, can now in the 21st century exemplify this modification of use and meaning for visual art within a *new space*.

*"In an age of pictorial reproduction the meaning of paintings is no longer attached to them; their **meaning** becomes **transmittable**, that is to say it becomes **information** of a sort and like all **information**, it is either put to use or ignored; **information** carries no special authority within itself. When a **painting** is put to use its **meaning** is either **modified** or totally **changed**. One should be quite clear about what this involves. It is not a question of reproduction failing to reproduce certain aspects of an image faithfully, it is a question of reproduction making it possible, even inevitable, that an **image** will be **used** for many different purposes*

and that the reproduced image, unlike an original work, can lend itself to them all" (Berger, 1972, p 24-25).

(Researcher's emphasis).

The value therefore of a work of art within the *new space* as a network resource is to attribute, assign and modify use and meaning to the work in specific context that a purely aesthetic account could not contain (Robson and Dixon, 2001).

No *a priori* can be given for value construction as criteria and value properties are applied by each individual uniquely. However, personal meaning, context, use of DVA and the integration of the results into his or her own life can be considered as crucial elements in the individual's construction of value. The research identified the following four elements of value construction (the characteristics and philosophy of value and the subsequent realisation of the four elements are discussed in further detail in Chapter 3):

1. DVA information seeking process.
2. Issues of context.
3. Mode of access.
4. Utility of DVA information.

These elements were explored to gain insight into value as constructed and understood by each individual of his or her own experience (Dent, 1995; Badenoch et al, 1994).

It is here the *threads* identified by Cooper (1993), relevant to the user's reality and life experience contribute to the value as a whole. The experience DVA offers is bound in the awareness in which the experience is understood (Budd, 1995).

If the value of visual art within *new space* is to ***attribute, assign, and modify*** use and meaning then criteria and value properties will be applied by each

individual uniquely. Value resides distinctively within each individual and is attributed by the individual in specific context.

Individuals come together to share, communicate and express their own value experience, therefore value can be determined as a social construct, a shared belief, varying according to the individual and differing contexts (Robson and Dixon, 2001). By studying the particular, the individual's value, the general community value can also be constructed (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In a learning society, learning has a wider context than information. It is a

"process of active engagement with experience...it may involve an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values, feelings, attitudes and capacity to reflect" (Resource, 2001 p. 5).

The measurement of value to the individual will be defined by the action [i.e. the access to digitised visual art] having a beneficial, positive, life-enhancing effect upon the individual. Initially value may hold merely an intrinsic property, which through repeated use of the acquired knowledge, or skill can develop into a value of substance.

2.5: The Learning Society and Community Space

The learning society has been perceived as the "rallying cry", which has emerged in response to economic, social and technical challenges (Edwards, et al, 1998). A review of the literature identified the emphasis lifelong learning placed upon the individual with the potential for the empowerment and provision of more choice and opportunity (Edwards et al, 1998). However, the learning society is not uniform in its structure or delivery and is experienced differently according to local conditions i.e. where the individual lives and the local authority provider. The Government's ambition is to create a society of learning facilitated by the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). By exploring the learning society the reality of those who participate and the context in which participation occurs, can be revealed.

The underlying concept of the Government's learning society is that of an inclusive society, i.e. **access** for all and a society that sees learning as a

continual process not stages in the early years of life. In the learning society the individual must be *information literate*, and those who are information literate have

“Learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organised, how to find information, and how to use that information...They are people prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand” (Varlejs, 1990).

The principle of lifelong learning is that it operates on a number of levels. These pertain to the **individual**, the **community** in which individuals live and work and the **social** parameters (Ministry of Education Finland, 1997). Continuous learning demands of the individual basic skills and a knowledge base. Learning is not only for education, vocational or academic achievement, learning is also for personal fulfilment. Leisure learning has been demonstrated successfully in Finland as a means to foster a learning society (Ministry of Education Finland, 1997).

The Fryer report (1997) identified the need for a new learning culture; lifelong learning for all in order that society could meet the challenge of the 21st Century (Fryer, 1997). Fryer (1999) further perceived lifelong learning to exceed education; he states that lifelong learning is for

*“health, transport, communication, entertainment, for **arts and culture**, for family life and the environment”* (Fryer, 1999, p27)
(Researcher's emphasis).

The boundaries between these areas of provision must be transgressed to bring together these important features of society so that the goal of lifelong learning is achieved (Fryer, 1999). Sargent's (1991) study of lifelong learning determined that the majority of adults were not involved in lifelong learning due to a lack of support, motivation and interest. Once motivated and equipped the individual should be supported and encouraged to engage in the process of learning and ultimately self-empowerment.

The non-academic objectives of learning are concerned with the broader social aspects of existence. Increasing the individual's freedom of choice presents a rationale for consideration of desirable and worthwhile qualities (Raven, 1977).

In *Towards the Learning Society*, Ranson identified the cause of [educational] underachievement as the

"long cultural tradition of educating the minority" (Ranson, 1992).

Even though the Government is still committed to increasing access to ICTs and the continual growth of electronic resources including DVA, effective access by the individual is not guaranteed. Enhanced opportunities within a community in the provision of access and DVA resources have the potential to add a further [value] distinction to the quality of an individual's experience of their own reality.

Prior to the DCMS (2000) initiative *Creating Opportunities*, libraries were identified as being at the heart of the communities they serve, providing the widest possible access to a range of services and resources. Libraries are recognised in the public identity of the community, providing access to those who otherwise may not develop the use of new resources (Library Association, 1997; Das, 2000).

Improving quality of life for all is the underlying ethos of *Creating Opportunities* (DCMS, 2000). DCMS acknowledge the importance of the role played by cultural services, whilst recognising that a local cultural strategy needs to reflect the life, experience and uniqueness of the community (DCMS, 2000).

In the report *Beyond 2000, Towards 2010* (1999) Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, seeks to enable each member of its community to realise his or her own potential by providing the best quality of life in a healthy, safe

and sustainable environment, including widening participation and opportunity for lifelong learning and leisure.

The electronic network at the very heart of ICTs, facilitates the sharing of resources. Responding to the changes in society and working life, the culture and ideology of the learning society can further extend the learning process to the home, libraries, public and community areas through such networks and shared resources. A *connected community* is paramount to the success of a National and Regional [Northern] Grid for learning. The Grid provides the content that activates the network of schools, libraries, museums, colleges and universities, aiding the navigation of the user around the content. Such enhanced opportunities of access to shared DVA resources within the community have the potential to add a further distinction to the quality of an individual's experience.

Any form of interaction with [visual art] information is a learning experience building on the individual's own personal experiences and previous knowledge and thus transforming it into personal understanding. Recent literature recognises the emphasis lifelong learning places on the individual with the potential for empowerment and provision of more choice and opportunity (Edwards, 1998).

The ideal learning society is one in which all members of society have high quality education and training throughout their lives and the appeal of such a learning society lies in the promise of the regeneration of the public sphere.

*"Citizens of a learning society by means of their continuing education, will be able to engage in critical dialogue and action to improve the quality of life for the whole **community** and to ensure **social integration**"* (Edwards, 1998). (Researcher's emphasis).

Jürgen Habermas (1989) defines the public sphere as a collection of individuals who come together to discuss common matters, and suggests that in the 18th Century there was the emergence of a public sphere with the rise

of the middle classes and the creation of public spaces i.e. associations, clubs, coffee houses, salons and theatres. This was accompanied by the developing new structure for social interaction and communication in the form of the press and publishing houses (Underwood, 2003). Within the new communication structure and physical spaces, individuals were presented with the opportunity to come together and discuss poetry, philosophy, aesthetics, social issues and also matters of governance. *new space* has the potential to facilitate discourse and interaction between groups of individuals within their own community space.

Undoubtedly, communities of which individuals are members play a significant role in shaping their social identity and actions (Crow and Allen, 1994). The quality of an individual's life can be influenced by the quality of life made available in that community and the resources the individual can acquire (Baier, 1973).

2.6: Informal Places of Learning

Social inclusion and equality cannot be simply given to an individual or a community. The culture and paradigm of the learning society extends the opportunity for empowerment for the community and the individual within. Education plays a key role in the provision of information skills, and undeniably public institutions, such as galleries, libraries, schools and universities are increasingly pivotal players within the community.

Community provision is fundamental for the future of the learning society and the establishment of a learning culture for the individual. Accurate and useful information is essential in shaping the quality of the individual's life, and which can be determined by making informed judgements. Access to information contributes and is essential to this sense of life[long] learning. Endowing individuals with information skills [and ultimately *information* which underpins learning] can move towards a premise of a socially inclusive society. It is therefore important that local authorities recognise the significance of visual art and the need for meaningful access. In establishing a connected

community, access to visual art must be integrated as an inherent feature within their planning.

By circumstance or disadvantage, particular individuals are excluded or have excluded themselves from the benefits of formal education. However, learning as a process that happens throughout life is taking place continually outside the structure of formal education (Brookfield, 1983) and increasingly the *new spaces* in the community are becoming '*informal places of learning*'. Learning need no longer be restricted to a formal structure or location but can take place in such an "informal space" within the community. It is this relaxation of structure that allows engagement at all ages and levels. By bringing learning into the individual's own community space the shift in focus onto the individual as learner is re-emphasised and the scope to take advantage of learning opportunities and resources increased. Removal of formal accredited programmes brings into sharper focus the learner's own interests and the context in which the learning experience occurs (*Resource*, 2001).

Learning can be determined as a social and cultural process, engaging individuals at all levels, by presenting opportunities within their own community space and into their everyday life. This process can be influenced by the individual through their own interaction with resources, between peer groups, relationships and collaboration in the *new space*. The potential of informal places of learning can be realised by ensuring that they are of value to people; that potential users can see that using these spaces and resources can make a difference to their lives. In order to do this, research must turn to the user to gain an understanding of their needs and how they make use of these spaces and resources. This can only be achieved by talking to people in their own space.

2.7: Research

Library and Information Science research has been to some extent inhibited by the system or provider's definition of user needs (Badenoch, et al 1994; Dervin & Nilan, 1986; Saracevic & Kantor, 1997; Kuhlthau, 1991; Pettigrew et

al, 1999; Taylor, 1982). Research has concentrated on frameworks of value for provision by going to the provider or system to determine the needs of the user and 'value' of the information system to that user. This research determines that only by understanding the value as attributed by the individual can improved provision of 'information' be made possible. Back in 1982 Taylor suggested

"if we can temper present systems design with criteria derived from users and their environments then we should be able to design systems that are more responsive..." (Taylor, 1982, p341-346).

Following Taylor's plea, studies within the research environment, which have a focus on the user, are still in a minority. In 1999 Pettigrew et al identified that there was still a paucity of

"solid evidence regarding citizen's information behaviour" (Pettigrew et al, 1999, p327-360).

Discussing this lack in relation to citizen information Pettigrew et al acknowledge a research deficiency in the areas of user perceptions, information use and the impetus to seek information. Julien's (1996) review of the literature between 1990 and 1994 illustrated that the tendency of such research was to simply produce user statistics (Pettigrew, et.al. 1999). To date there has been a marked increase in research taking a user centred approach particularly in the area of system and web based design, however there is still a tendency to measure that, which can be measured easily.

In 2002 the 24-HOUR MUSEUM began to publish web statistics for UK cultural websites. The survey for both 2002 and 2003 uses five performance indicators based on the New Opportunity Fund (NOF) guidelines. The performance indicators compare institutions by *user numbers, session duration, unique visitors, page impressions* (total and per session). These statistics provide a basis for understanding of the use of such sites but such numbers do not interpret use or offer a deeper understanding of the user's purpose. It is the very facts they do not tell us that we desire or need to know (Boyle, 2000).

Following the publication of the 2003 survey results responses from the JISC mail list *Museum Computer Group* observed that while this

“sort of year-on-year comparative survey is incredibly useful, especially for those of us that are trying to understand (or are trying to build a case for) the long-term funding and sustainability of on-line museum provision” (Parry, 2004)

it was qualitative data that was ‘critically’ needed to answer such questions as:

- *“WHY are these users choosing to access museum web sites?*
- *Are our sites just an 'information utility', like running water or a gas supply that users just choose to turn on in their everyday lives now and again for a variety of mundane reasons?*
- *WHO is with these users when they are having these experiences?*
- *WHERE are they - at home (in the kitchen, in a bedroom, in a study ...?), at work (for work, during a lunch break?), in the classroom, on the move ... ? Surely all this matters as well? It matters to what we choose to provide on-line and it matters to the way we do it.” (Parry, 2004)*

Therefore a more responsive approach would seek an understanding of the user perspective to advance provision, which implies seeking understanding of value as attributed by the individual. This research identified that an approach, which places the individual at the very heart of the research, was needed. In 1999 Bakardjieva and Smith identified the user as

“traditionally seen as the person to whom technological innovation arrives last but who never-the-less represents the target of innovation products...”(Bakardjieva and Smith, 1999, p1).

This research has endeavoured to address such thinking by taking a considered approach and re-directing the focus onto the individual user.

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Chapter 3: Value

This study of value became a significant element in the research guiding the research design and the researcher's chosen methodological approach.

3.1: Introduction

Walter Benjamin's (1935) discourse surrounding the technology of cinema and photography as creators of a true mass culture and the extract from John Berger's (1972) 'Ways of Seeing' based on Benjamin's work, can be used to exemplify a modification of **use** and **meaning** for visual art within *new space*. A constructivist approach determines that each individual constructs meaning for his or herself, and that there is no value/knowledge independent of that meaning constructed and attributed to an experience by the individual or the community within (Hein, 1996).

This research perceived that value resides uniquely within each individual and is attributed by the individual within a specific context. The individual through an experience or event within his or her own life attributes value (Badenoch et al, 1994; Berleant, 1970; Budd, 1995; Carroll, 1999; Dent, 1995; Findlay, 1961; Fogarty, 1996; Lewis, 1946; Shaffer, 1971; Saracevic & Kantor, 1997). Individuals come together to share, communicate and express their own value experience. This concept of value can only be explored by going to the individual directly.

Value is commonly discussed in economic terms, using notation, the vocabulary of the positivist paradigm and frequently employing quantitative methodology. Here this research endeavours to seek a depth and insight to value as understood uniquely by each individual and which cannot be readily discovered and conveyed within a positivist paradigm using statistical terms. The exploration of value, unique to each individual, goes beyond such economic terms and behavioural statistics.

The research question proposes that an individual will derive value from the experience of the action i.e. the holistic process of access to DVA and such an action may have a beneficial, positive, life-enhancing effect upon the individual. However such an experience may also initiate an effect of less or little value. This experience and its resultant effect upon the individual will be congruous within itself. Therefore both positive values and values of less worth are acknowledged as equally relevant.

The concept of culture can be characterised in terms of information, the social and cultural value of information being the *“maintenance and transmission of culture, the non-genetic transmission of knowledge”* (Badenoch et al, 1994, p 28). Value in information itself is not inherent nor is it when carried by a message or in communication. The value is in the **content** and attributed by the **individual in specific context**, the message has meaning only in that context. Taylor (1980) determines that the message or communication holds a potential value, utility or meaning if the individual decides to make use of that information.

“Information is an intangible that depends on the conceptualisation and understanding of the human being. Records contain words or pictures (tangibles) absolutely, but they contain information relative only to the user...” (Tague-Suitcliff, 1995 in Saracevic & Kantor, 1997, p. 532).

Tague-Suitcliff (1995) notes the occurrence of such a transaction (associated with information) between the user and record, and between the **viewer and image**. The result of this transaction will be *value*.

For many the experience of this initial interaction is an “affective experience” and not a purely cognitive one (Cooper, 1993). Cooper identifies the flawed assumption that the encounter with visual art is just *“about getting knowledge, i.e. within the cognitive domain”* (Cooper, 1993).

This cognitive plane Cooper perceives will not be reached unless the experience of that initial interaction is an affective one. The purpose of this

enquiry into value is to enable the researcher to identify elements, contextual factors that construct a notion of value to develop a working definition, a morphology to be used in the study. It is not the aim of this discourse to provide a definitive answer or method to equating a measurement of value, rather to gain meaningful insight into the elements of value that are constructed and attributed by an individual.

This exploration of value begins with an understanding of the term, what does the word *value* mean and asking the question what creates value? Philosophical theories of value are discussed in order to establish the development of axiology i.e. the theory of value. Within axiology the discussion focuses on aesthetic value, value systems and issues of traditional aesthetics. The discourse then considers perceptions of value in information focussing upon the individual, the user, as opposed to the information system, and finally the relationship between value and a work of art is considered.

3.2: Defining the term 'Value'

"the worth, desirability, or utility of a thing or qualities on which they depend worth as estimated the amount for which a thing can be exchanged the equivalent of a thing the ability of a thing to serve a purpose or cause an effect one's principles or standards one's judgement of what is important in life music, the duration of a sound signified by a note Math, amount denoted by a term or expression Physics and Chemistry, numerical measure of a quantity"

(Oxford Dictionary, 1998)

The term or word 'value' is used and applied to a multitude of meanings within culture and society. Generally value is understood to be a form of measurement, an evaluation of worth, broadly categorised in monetary, quantity and life terms. There are many types of value and each in specific context can be realised instrumentally and some intrinsically (Bailey, 1999). Bailey (1999) lists a number of value types. *Moral, Spiritual, Political, Historical, Military, Philosophical, Entertainment, Economic, Educational, Information, Transportation, Emotional Aesthetic, Medical*, and identifies that

some of these values will inevitably 'overlap' for example information value can also have an element of educational value. Bailey (1999) distinguishes distinct values and exemplifies aesthetic value, in that an object can be said to have a high aesthetic value and very low or no economic value. The individual through an experience or event within his or her own reality, attributes 'value'. Individuals come together to share, communicate and express their own 'value' experience. Therefore value can be determined as a social construct a shared belief that varies according to differing contexts.

These contexts can take the form of the *political, social, economic* or *philosophical*. Personal relevance, relationship and subjectivity of the 'value' are all dependent upon the context in which the *value* experience occurs. The analysis of this term *value* has relevance in the study of cultural, communication and information phenomena as an

"internalisation of an individual's values is dependent upon communicated information through socialisation" (O'Sullivan, 1994, p.328).

Value has been defined and most commonly associated with a positive affirmation, something worthwhile, desirable. Value can be expressed as the utility of an object or the power of possessing such an object. The existence of a negative value i.e. an experience or the utility of an object that is deemed less worthy exists and must be acknowledged. However within the literature and discourse surrounding *value* little reference is made to value as possessing negative qualities.

Value can be identified as having a number of dimensions and attributes. Saracevic and Kantor (1997) determine these to be intrinsic value, extrinsic value, inherent or instrumental value and contributory value.

Intrinsic value of an object or thing is deemed good or worthy. In discussing that which is immediately valuable Lewis (1946) defined the conception of intrinsic value as

*“the only thing intrinsically valuable...valuable for its own sake is a goodness immediately found or findable and **unmistakable** when disclosed, all values of any other sort, including all values attributable to objects, are extrinsic and valued for the sake of their possible contribution to such realisations of the immediately good”* (Lewis, 1946, p.397). (Researcher's emphasis)

Extrinsic value is or contributes to that which is intrinsically valuable originating from the outside, acting upon the 'thing' as a whole. Extrinsic value is external to the thing and is not derived from its essential nature. **Inherent or Instrumental value** is an experience or understanding that contributes to an intrinsic value. It is involved in the constitution or essential character of the thing. **Contributory value** relates and contributes to the value of the whole.

3.3: What Creates Value?

In economic terms wealth creates economic value by such factors as labour, capital and resources. The developing information society has created new factors and now information is perceived as a creator of value, i.e. knowledge becomes a value (Drucker, 1994, in Saracevic and Kantor, 1997).

As discussed in Chapter 2, the discourse and literature concerning the learning society recognises the emphasis lifelong learning places on the individual with the potential for empowerment and provision of more choice and opportunity (Edwards et al, 1998). The ideal learning society is one in which all members of society have high quality education and training throughout their lives. As Edwards et al (1998) identified such a learning society is an inclusive society where citizens through a developed culture of continual learning will be enabled to engage in activity and critical dialogue to improve not only their quality of life but that too of their community.

Sargent's (1991) study of lifelong learning determined that the majority of adults were not involved in lifelong learning due to a lack of support, motivation and interest. Once motivated and equipped the individual should

be supported and encouraged to engage in the acquisition of knowledge and ultimately value and self-empowerment.

The non-academic objectives of education are concerned with the broader social aspects of existence. Increasing the individual's **freedom of choice** presents a rationale for consideration of desirable and worthwhile qualities (Raven, 1977). Enhanced opportunities within a community in the provision of access and DVA information have the potential to add a further value distinction to the quality of an individual's experience of their own reality.

3.4: Philosophical Issues

Philosophical concerns of value have centred upon three related issues; *the characteristic of having value*; whether having value is an *objective or subjective matter*, and attempting to identify *what has value or is valuable* (Dent, 1995).

The ***characteristic of having value*** may be defined as a relational property meeting a human need. This characteristic can also be attributed to something that is prized or has special meaning. Because of this it is valued or conversely it is prized because it is of value. Whether having value is an objective or subjective matter is directly influenced by this *characteristic of having value*. This type of characteristic will influence the view of the value as being subjective or objective. By attending to the distinction between what is valuable, that which is directly prized and the value contributing to the realisation of an intrinsic value quality, Lewis (1946) concludes that the elements of a value construction can be identified and distinguished between a value of immediacy and a mere evaluatory value.

Subjective Value is particular to each individual, affected by personal views, experience, or background and arising out of or identified by means of the individual's own perception of their own reality and position within. **Objective Value** is a verifiable value being influenced by what in actuality exists or is

real, i.e. that which can be seen and touched not merely perceived by the emotions.

If something holds a unique (*subjective*) value to a particular individual because of a special role in their life then that object or experience can be identified as an **Objective Truth**, even though it holds a special significance only to that individual; for the very reason that the value is influenced by the **experience** or object within **context**. The individual will display in some form evidence of a *valuable experience* providing proof a verifiable fact that they receive or apply a *measure of value* to the experience or object.

Thus what has value or is valuable can be distinguished as a value to an individual because of a special relationship. By exploring, the information seeking process, issues of context, mode of access, utility of information the researcher can gain insight to the *objective truth* as understood by each individual.

3.5: Value Theories

Early value theories centred upon a normative approach, what value should be and not in actuality what it is. Medieval value theory concerned itself with the utility [value] of an object. Value was primarily discussed and regarded as an integral part of ethical and moral philosophy. The theories discussed here are not exhaustive and are used only to establish the *mise-en-scène*, ideology, concept and development of value.

Theories of value support a rationale for its descriptive terminology, an evaluation of being worthy, of being valued, something that ought to be valued. Value can be discerned as worthwhile not for what it brings, but in and for itself, a means or an end. Value is said to be truly worthwhile when it is desirable in itself (Shaffer, 1971).

Axiological ethics is an area of moral philosophy that deals specifically with values. Unlike other areas concerned with morality, focusing on what an

individual should do, axiological ethics concentrates on what is worth pursuing and what should be avoided (Kuperman, 1995). It is also concerned with the question of values related to self and the sense of self, focusing on relationships, things/objects and states of mind. Relationships and things/objects have an effect upon each individual uniquely. Happiness, which has been determined as "*a cluster of values*" (Kuperman, 1995, p.71) is also associated with self-esteem and the concept of self, falling into the category of a subconscious evaluation influenced by the "*feel good factor*" (Badenoch et al, 1994).

Instrumental Value is determined by something lending itself to an achievement or purpose by design or through opportunity. Aristotle illustrated this term of value in the description of slaves as *living tools* possessing a value based on need, *as a means to*.

Economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) expanded upon Aristotle's supposition in that everything has two uses one for exchange and the other utility. In relation to economic value Smith distinguished between *value-in-use* [the utility of some particular object] and *value-in exchange* [the power of acquiring other goods with the possession of that object].

Based on a theory of labour David Ricardo (1772 - 1823) applied a hypothesis discarded by Smith, believing value to be dependent upon [in economic terms] two factors, scarcity and the labour employed in achieving the desired goal. The approach by Karl Marx (1818-1883) was similar to that of Ricardo and Aristotle. Marx's theory of an exchange of a 'just' value held not only economic but also moral and judicial implications (Fogarty, 1996).

Transvaluation of Values is Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844 - 1900) revaluation of value. In this Nietzsche discussed value in the terms of 'value for life'; (Schast, 1995) attributing worth to things valued both positively and negatively. Nietzsche proposed that both negative and positive values were required for the "flourishing of human existence" believing that the mode for

valuation should be understood in the perspective of life. In proclaiming, “*God is Dead*” Nietzsche, argued that individuals were therefore free to create their own values.

Relativist Value Theory understands the value attributed to an object or experience as the said object’s or experiences’ actual value. Acceptance of this value determines that any object or experience can have or lack all possible values. A group can also attribute this value; the value is the actual value they believe at a particular moment. This value may be determined false at some point if the group’s collective thinking is changed.

Reductivist Value Theory is a hierarchical theory that reduces a high level [value] property to a low level [value] property. The theory denies one property and uses another to account for the original property (Bailey, 1999). Reductivism replaces terms [value properties] such as *value* or *goodness* with “truth statements” (Bailey, 1999) i.e. “has value” “is good”.

Aesthetic Value attributes terms to art that hold no moral or utility worth, such as *good* or *fine*. To distinguish aesthetic value the object requires an account of beauty. Beauty is the attribute of a thing of virtue, which pleases when perceived

“a blending of the unity, truth, and goodness in a thing, characterised by completeness, proportion, and clarity of presentation in an intellectual-sensuous form, so as to produce a disinterested emotional pleasure in a rational perceiver” (Adventures in Philosophy, 2000).

The question of aesthetic value raises the issue of whether this value is an objective or a purely subjective value, and asks if this value accords with an aesthetic standard or system?

Awareness of the social and economic development of value theories which undoubtedly influence concepts of value thinking today is essential in the process of seeking understanding of the individual’s own value construction.

One or all of these suppositions can be true, as each individual adheres to his or her own value theory.

3.6: Aesthetics

The philosophy of aesthetics is a myriad of ideas and theorising manipulated and adapted accordingly to particular periods, doctrines and art movements. All these theories exist in parallel, Appendix I, sets out some of the principle areas of aesthetic thinking. This exploration of aesthetics serves not only to understand the complex nature of aesthetic theory but also to substantiate the researcher's decision not to pursue a purely aesthetic value. The term aesthetics derives from the Greek *aisthesis* meaning perception and originally applied to the study of beauty by the German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1735). Baumgarten defined the experience of beauty as the sensory recognition of perfection. Aesthetic theory has concerned itself with how people respond to beauty and whether this taste is relative to the individual or a universal understanding.

Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) *Critique of Judgement* unleashed the debate on the relationship between the individual and visual culture, his philosophy dominating aesthetics with his antinomy of taste analysis. Aesthetics concerns itself primarily with the

"complex cultural institution in which works of art are embedded"
(Kendall, 1996 p. 172).

There is a tendency derived from Kant's philosophy to consider art as *"wholly autonomous from the rest of life"* (Kendall, 1996 p. 173), initiating a divide between the 'art establishment' and the wider community and individuals within. However, understanding how art is used can bridge this gap. A failing in traditional aesthetics is the pre-occupation of the eulogisation of beauty or the singling out of all other aesthetic qualities in favour of one.

The discourse surrounding aestheticism identifies art to be appreciated for its aesthetic merit requiring no justification, Art for Arts sake.

The focus on formal qualities (space, colour, composition) instils an elitism in the process of the encounter with art assuming knowledge of the institution, aesthetics and a standard of taste. Clive Bell (1881-1964) argued that the starting point for a system of aesthetics was the *“personal experience of a peculiar emotion”* (Bell, 1914). This he called the aesthetic emotion an emotion that allowed people to respond to the beauty of colour and form, significant form being a common quality to all works of art (Bell, 1914). Bell argued his theorising fixed aesthetics as a subjective matter, i.e. the experience of the aesthetic emotion having no objective validity:

“Any system of aesthetics which pretends to be based on some objective truth is so palpably ridiculous as not to be worth discussing” (Bell, 1914, p.7-9).

John Dewey (1851-1952) perceived the roots of aesthetic experience to lie in the commonplace experience, the only reality being through such experience,

“whenever there is a coalescence into an immediately enjoyed qualitative unity of meanings and values drawn from previous experience and present circumstances, life then takes on an aesthetic quality...an experience” (Dewey, 1958 in Field, 1996, p.12).

Dewey’s treatment of aesthetics discerned the individual as always a social being and the realisation of individual achievement only occurring within the social context and the institutions therein.

In *Art As Experience* (1932) Dewey discussed

“the expansion meaning, the enrichment of the individual’s appreciation of his/her own circumstances within human culture” (Dewey, 1958 in Field, 1996, p.13).

He identified a social role for art,

“because art has its roots in the consummator values experienced in the course of human life, its values have an affinity to commonplace values” (Dewey, 1958 in Field, 1996, p.14).

Welsch (1998) identifies that to some extent Dewey's integration of art into life adheres to traditional aesthetics in that art remains the focus of the aesthetic.

The researcher must as Berleant (1970) establishes in *Aesthetics and Contemporary Art*, deny the

"disinterestedness ...and the consequences this [aesthetic] notion has had in quarantining the object from the creative interplay with the ongoing concerns of human living" (Berleant, 1970, p. 424).

Berleant asks that in order to accept an appropriate aesthetic for contemporary art [and art in a new space] the notion that art is unique must be rejected while affirming the importance on the community of art and life. (Berleant, 1970).

Aesthetic concepts of art do not always capture the contemporary nor does an account of beauty seem wholly appropriate in contemporary aesthetics. Rather an alternative theory of art focusing on social aspects and use in context is required, particularly in offering the *new space* for visual art. Aesthetics and aesthetic value is too narrow, it has continually re-modelled itself to accommodate these periods, doctrines and movements and now acknowledgement of a new aesthetic thinking is required.

"Art is not restricted to a single aesthetic feat [but a] multitude of feats and diverse perceptual modes cooperate in the perception of a work" (Welsch, 1998 p.11).

Welch identifies that the perception of art is poly-perceptual,

"work of arts require a manifold of perceptual feats. They transcend the merely contemplative dimension; historical dimensions belong to them as well as semantic and allegorical, societal, everyday or political dimensions...and of course, emotional, imaginative and reflective experiences too" (Welsch, 1998, p.12).

Recognition of an aesthetic element in the construction of value by an individual will be subjective and instrumentalist in that any aesthetic attitude will lead to a value as a means to an end i.e. leading to desirables, knowledge or a cohesive community. This will be governed by how the individual sees and perceives his or her own reality. A selective attention for a specific reason determines how a thing or object is perceived.

The aesthetic element must be stretched to cover everything that is conceivable of value in visual art whilst acknowledging that visual art has values that are not aesthetic (Budd, 1995; Robson and Dixon, 2001).

3.7: Value Systems

Such theories of value infer that an individual recognises a system of value. Are these values universally understood, relative or particular to each individual, culture, society or country? If value is related to use and only relevant or significant in relation to society, value can be associated and identified by the examination of what people desire. The individual, an organisation or social behaviour based upon human intentionality, may govern the determination of value, *"values are derived from life, from environment from self, society and culture"* (Mukerjee, 1964, p. 9).

Kurt Baier (Laslo and Wilbur 1973) establishes that the measure of quality of the individual's life is determined by demands made upon it and distinguished in four categories.

- Demands an individual confers upon himself.
- Demands others confer on the individual.
- Requisites of a valuable or admirable life.
- Criticism of the three prior demands as being over or under ambitious.

Here Baier is discussing the contribution to life quality by society and direct action. The individual may also confer upon himself a more valuable quality of life in the *"same environmental condition...by increasing ... health, strength, skills, knowledge"* (Laslo and Wilbur, 1973, p.5). Baier determines that

“clearly the quality of an individuals life is very largely determined by the quality of life made available in that society, [and] the resources one can acquire” (Laslo and Wilbur, 1973, p.5).

If by this, value is largely determined by the individual but influenced by society, a social system of value must be acknowledged and understood by the individual.

“By a social value we understand any datum having an empirical content accessible to the members of some social group and a meaning with regard to which it is or may be an object of activity” (Znaniecki, 1936).

Therefore if value is a social construct the researcher must seek to explore value within the individual's natural setting, i.e. within a real life context, the community, as it is within this environment the individual will attribute, come together to share, communicate and express their own value experience.

3.8: Value of Information

Information is considered within information science in relation to cognition. In 1991 Kuhlthau noted that a consensus was emerging amongst cognitive scientists with regard to how humans construct and find meaning in their own world.

“People actively and constantly construct a view of their world by assimilating and accommodating new information with what they already know or have experienced” (Kuhlthau, 1991, p. 362).

Information is also perceived in regards to motivation and internationality occurring within culture and work in a social context. Information is epistemic when considered in the context of human knowledge and understanding. (Badenoch et al, 1994), i.e. focus centred on the human aspect, how information reflects and affects the individual's understanding of his/her own reality.

Hill (1999) identifies many perceptions and notions of information, noting Shannon and Warren's "*information as that which reduces uncertainty*" as having merit in relating information to value. Mason et al (1995, p35) define information as "*the symbolic means by which one mind influences another*". This, Hill states, gives greater meaning to information as part of the communication process (Hill, 1999). Whilst Wilson acknowledges the complexity of defining information as a single universal term he perceives the problem to lie

"not so much with the lack of a single definition as with the failure to use a definition appropriate to the level and purpose of the investigation" (a much quoted definition Wilson, 1981, p.1).

Information has a social role, continually evolving in the developing information society forming part of daily life, while technological advancements provide opportunities for *access* and *new space*.

Therefore the value of epistemic information must be considered within an appropriate framework. A purely cognitive framework may be adequate for certain research questions, however within this research a wider holistic view is required. This wider view must embrace Wilson's conception of information as a means to an end "*satisfying fundamental needs*" (Wilson, 1981, p. 10) i.e. how the *ends* serve the user's needs, within a contextual framework.

Badenoch et al, (1994) determine context to be a salient factor in the value of information. Three aspects determine value in context:

1. Subjectivity i.e. value being dependent upon the context in which the information is viewed.
2. Relationship, the timeliness of the information is directly related to context.
3. Personal experience of the information, which is governed by the relevance of that information in context.

They also suggest the use of an integrated framework for value, which has three common attributes in the approach to value in information:

1. Situation–specificity.
2. Social context of value.
3. System dependency.

Situation specificity refers to the value of information within a specific context; the content of that information generates a specific value while a generic value is achieved through the situation and information system.

The ***context*** of sociality infers a value on information that is a two way process between the individual and society. Holistically society attributes a value to information, however ‘society’ can be sub-divided into a number of groups;

- The economic sector.
- Organisation information system/services.
- The individual

all of whom attribute at another level value to information (Badenoch et al,1994).

System dependency refers to the “*redundancy in a specific means of delivering information*” (Badenoch et al, 1994, p. 59), that is the way in which information is acquired or made available in differing methods and format.

If the concepts of value discussed earlier are applied to information we can say to be informed has an intrinsic value, while information has an extrinsic value i.e. it advances the person’s state of being informed. Contributory value is attributed to an information service as it is connected to the decision or application i.e. the informed person, whereas the information carrier carrying an object potentially conveying information has an inherent value, this could be a book or visual art. (Saracevic and Kantor, 1997).

In *Information as Thing* (1990) Buckland’s notion of information as a thing defines information as a physical concept, tangible evidence, a notion Bell

(1993) advises that art practitioners have been maintaining for many years. In *Information Technology and the Universal Availability of Images*, Pacey (1983) re-states Benjamin's warning

"that the illiterates of the future will be not those who cannot read but those who cannot read images" (Benjamin, in Pacey, 1983 p. 234).

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2 the concept of a 'pictorial turn' places the emphasis on the image as visual information (Mitchell, 1994, Woodrow, 2000).

Visual communication [a vast visible world for providers and users, with images entering every aspect of life] is increasingly technology dependent and as Pacey foresees creating a one way process of *"image production by the few...received by the many"* (Pacey, 1983, in Bell 1993, p. 62). Helene Roberts (1988) identified the general population as becoming

"increasingly literate...[changing] traditional art history focused on aesthetics and style, [to] the use of art as a means to investigate and illuminate other cultural aspects" (Roberts, 1988 in Bell, 1993, p. 24).

This takes the use of pictorial information to the user and outside the discipline of the arts.

A central premise is that value is related to use, value is created and applied in specific context, in the information society value is knowledge. An experience [by an individual], events or an entity is the application of information relevance in specific context. Saracevic and Kantor (1997), identify three approaches to establishing [information] value, although their research taxonomy was intended to determine the "system" their framework was developed by first going to the user:

1. *Normative Value*, An approach of rigour that is formal dealing with information decision-making and utility. Based on underlying assumptions this approach is restrictive in the information considered and its application in real life situations.

2. *Realistic Value*, The approach assumes information to be an identifiable variable and generally looks at new provision by identifying the effects of *before* and *after*.
3. *Perceived Value*, Deals with the subjective valuation by users of value or the benefits with information. To some this approach lacks rigour and precision as it deals with the value judgements of the user. However the perceived approach focuses in and gains by understanding the emic perspective. This approach can dispel those dissenting voices demanding rigour by applying a carefully structured and planned methodology. (Saracevic and Kantor 1997).

3.9: Value of a Work of Art

Budd (1995) proposes that without value art is idle. A work of art can lay claim to many values: *cognitive, religious, economic, therapeutic, social, educational, historical, sentimental*. These values (which relate directly to Bailey's "many types" of value) are generated not by the object [work of art] itself but by the experience the individual has with the object. The experience a work of art offers is bound in the awareness in which the experience is understood. The experience of the work itself is a type of experience.

Value of a work of art is intrinsic to that work and is determined by the intrinsic value of the experience it offers. Therefore a work of art is only valuable if it offers an experience that is intrinsically valuable. The experience is dependent upon internal properties, qualities of the inner relationship i.e. with the individual as opposed to an extrinsic value relating to external others (Budd, 1995). This experience can be determined as an *objective truth*, a unique (subjective) value to that individual's experience with the work of art.

"dynamic sense as a co-ordinator and adjuster of integrated qualities into the meaning of the work of art" (Dewey, 1958 in Field, 1996 p 12).

These contributory factors are integral to the work and experience but may perform while the individual remains ignorant of their existence or purpose, or

without specific identification. Benefits of this experience are intrinsic to the experience and not merely a product. Aspects of the experience contribute to making the experience intrinsically valuable.

An instrumental value of a work of art is the perceived [by the individual] effect the experience of the work has upon that individual, or the effects produced if the individual was to experience the work. This experience is dependent upon the individual; the uniqueness of the “human making” can generate experience from a work of art to enhance life, as a stimulus, kindle or dampen desire (Budd, 1995).

“The experience and evaluation of art are socially and ideologically situated and constructed and at the same time irreducible to the social or the ideological” (Wolff, 1983 p.84).

For the individual a work of art holds an instrumental value, in an instrumental role visual art communicates to the individual; at another level, a global level, the work of art can provide the community with a common value.

Dewey believed art to be a product of culture and the vehicle through which the individual can develop and express the significance of their lives. Carroll (1999) in *Philosophy of Art* determines art to be valuable only because it affords an aesthetic experience; he concludes that if one can determine why this aesthetic experience is valuable then art’s value may be identified. Within the individual’s reality a work of art can be valued or valuable if it affords an opportunity to exercise the senses and offers recognition and distinction of qualities in the individual’s experiences of life. This may occur without the prior knowledge or acknowledgement of the aesthetic value or qualities.

To accord a purely aesthetic value to the experience of a work of art would not permit a holistic understanding of the value experience of access to DVA information. The aesthetic value is only one element or factor that contributes to the value as a whole. The value of a work of art within the *new space* as a

network resource is to **attribute, assign and modify** use and meaning to the work in specific context that a purely aesthetic account could not contain.

3.10: Summary

The fundamental ethos of the naturalistic inquiry is that the subjects of the inquiry are inextricably bound up in interrelationships that shape their realities. Understanding the use of DVA information in context by each individual will be paramount in the identification of the elements of value construction. Context enriches and limits the data; context drives towards specificity whilst the accumulation of specific detail provided by context describes these intricate interrelationships that convey the researcher into the setting (Erlandson, et al. 1993). Personal meaning and context in which the individual seeks DVA information and the integration of the results into their own life are crucial elements in the construction of value. No *a priori* can be given for value construction, as criteria and [value] properties are applied by each individual uniquely.

Exploring the information seeking process, issues of context, mode of access and utility of information will enable the researcher to gain insight to the *objective truth* as understood by each individual. The nature of value will inevitably initiate an 'overlapping' of values i.e. the individual will attribute multiple value elements to the experience of access to DVA information. These elements of construction will be dependent upon subject specificity, social context and system dependency [*new space*]. Value is not constructed in isolation nor can one value be attributed to the experience, as Williams suggests the nature of culture is a complex mix of values (Williams, 1981, in Painter 1987).

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Chapter 4: Method

4.1: Introduction

The basic premise underlying this research was that in order to advance provision and effective use of DVA resources research must seek the user perspective. This implied seeking an understanding of value as attributed by the individual. This understanding cannot be achieved in terms of abstraction but must be sought as a contextual whole, knowing reality as understood by the individual (Bradley, 1993). Therefore the nature of the study i.e. the concept of value and its meaning to the individual, guided by the research objectives governed the research questions.

Understanding of the social and economic development of value theories which influence concepts of value thinking today was essential in the process of seeking understanding of the individual's own value construction. Through the study of the philosophy and theories of value and the discourse surrounding the value of information and visual art, this research perceived that value resides uniquely within each individual and is attributed by the individual within a specific context. The individual, through an experience or event within his or her own life, attributes value (Badenoch et al, 1994; Berleant, 1970; Budd, 1995; Carroll, 1999; Dent, 1995; Findlay, 1961; Fogarty, 1996; Lewis, 1946; Shaffer, 1971; Saracevic and Kantor, 1997). Individuals come together to share, communicate and express their own value experience. This experience is dependent upon the individual, the uniqueness of the 'human making' (Badenoch et al, 1994; Budd, 95). Value therefore can be determined as a social construct, a shared belief that varies according to the individual and differing contexts. For that reason the research and methods employed needed to be designed in such a way that these *experiences* and *shared beliefs* could be captured.

Seeking an understanding of the individual's own unique value construction, experience and integration into his or her own reality, could not be readily discovered and conveyed within a positivist paradigm using statistical terms. It

needed to go beyond such terms and behavioural statistics by employing a constructivist, qualitative approach. By taking such a qualitative approach within in a constructivist inquiry the emphasis is placed on understanding reality as the participant sees it and how those participants make sense of their world (Bradley, 1993). This is supported by the underpinning hermeneutic philosophy, which is concerned with what is subjectively 'inside' the individual.

4.2: The Research Paradigm

The approach and action employed throughout this research was guided by the articulation of a set of beliefs as understood by the researcher. According to Bateson (1972) a paradigm is a "Net of epistemological and ontological premises which...regardless of falsity...become partially self validating" (Bateson, 1972, p. 314). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) identify a paradigm as an "interpretative framework or a set of beliefs that guide action" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 107). Guba and Lincoln (1994) perceive that an inquiry paradigm addresses three questions in relation to ontology, epistemology and methodological (Heron and Reason, 1997).

4.2.1: Ontology

Ontology is concerned with the question of reality. The principle axiom of the constructivist, qualitative paradigm is the nature of reality. This approach determines that there are multiple realities that are socio-psychological constructions that form an interconnected whole and can only be understood holistically, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994).

The researcher adopted a relativist ontology i.e. that knowledge is relative and limited to the nature of the mind, that truths are dependant upon the individuals holding them and that there exists multiple, socially constructed realities (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In the context of this research, the community is considered as a unique construction formed by its individual members and their unique understanding of their own 'community' place and participation.

4.2.2: Epistemology

Epistemology is the nature of knowing, what it means to know, the relationship between what can be known, the knower, and the researcher (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). In seeking a deeper level of meaning constructed by the individual (the knower) and mediated through the researcher the epistemological orientation of the researcher must be acknowledged, making explicit the researcher's subjective view and working from a realised bias, that is the commonalities between the researcher and the respondents, each being an individual, unique, member of the community and actively using the *new space* under enquiry. The researcher must also acknowledge her own positive experience of the particular community in question (Moules, 2002).

4.2.3: The Methodological question

is concerned with the process of how to know. How does this researcher find out about what they believe can be known of value and *new space*. The nature of the research demands that knowledge is gained through the researcher's understanding of the context and interaction through social constructions, languages, meanings and artefacts within *new space* (Berntsen et al, 2004). This research is therefore defined by its very nature as interpretative, in that the researcher is an active observer/participant in the everyday-life of the research, the *new space* (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) and assumes a hermeneutic perspective within a constructivist paradigm.

4.2.4: The Value of Being

The philosophical underpinning of this study relies on a shared meaning and understanding between the researcher and the individual respondent in the context of *new space*. Therefore it was required that the research paradigm incorporate a further premise as identified by Heron and Reason (1997) by adding a fourth question that is concerned with the **value of being** i.e. what the individual determines and understands to be value.

The researcher's commitment to a shared meaning and understanding determined that an emic view, i.e. the individual as [human] being and unique, was central to this research.

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3 constructivism perceives that each individual constructs meaning for his or herself and that there is no value/knowledge independent of that meaning attributed to an experience (constructed) by the individual or community (Hein, 1996). Vigotsky following Kantian constructivist beliefs determined that individuals construct knowledge and meaning for themselves within specific context (Hein, 1991). Therefore each construction is unique to that individual in that specific context. It is the notion of self and the individual's relationship with their world, past, present and future that form crucial elements in the understanding of value. Gaining the emic view, understanding and achieving insight into the individual's reality in their natural setting lay at the heart of the research question.

It is the relationship between the researcher and each individual respondent that produces a subjective understanding, in which the researcher acknowledges her own biases as human in the world being unique and equal to others.

The addition of this fourth question i.e. the value of being has guided the research (Heron and Reason, 1997) in that there could be no *a priori* given to value construction, as criteria and [value] properties are applied by each individual uniquely and therefore determining that the information seeking process, issues of context, mode of access and utility of information would enable the researcher to gain insight to value as understood by each individual.

4.3: Hermeneutics

Having defined the research paradigm the researcher identified hermeneutics to be the appropriate philosophy that underpins this research and the specific framework and method for analysis and interpretation.

Hermeneutics is concerned with what is subjectively 'inside' the individual:

"the interests and purposes that allow them to make sense of their day-to-day lives." (Heron, 1988).

Heidegger's essence of being, *Dasein*, is a conscious recognition of one's own world and it is that individual subjectivity that is of particular relevance to this research. Heidegger was concerned with the question "of being", of existence, what does it mean to exist to be an individual, a human being in the world? Existence of the individual is developed through his or her own life, experiences and background. This Heidegger determined as a

"necessary part of a human being-in-the-world 'Dasein', things are perceived according to how they are encountered and used in one's everyday routines and tasks" (Mallery et al, 1987).

Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics follows Heidegger in the connection to an individual's life experience and knowledge, their 'present horizon', as grounds for understanding (Palmer, 1999). For Gadamer understanding goes beyond this and it is the

"very condition of being human...a basic structure of our experience of life" (Schwandt, 1994, p.205).

Gadamer (1975) and Gallagher (1992) identify that an individual's prejudice or tradition, what Heidegger described as fore-knowledge, are elements of our understanding and rather than be 'shaken off' or 'stepped outside' aid that understanding,

"[they] shape what we are and how we understand the world, the attempt to step outside of the process of tradition [life knowledge/experience] would be like trying to step outside our own skin" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.195).

Hermeneutics is a holistic method, a cyclical process of data collection and analysis including textual analysis, a means to interpret and establish an understanding of the textual data collected and encountered throughout the

research process (Byrne, 1998). Heidegger's hermeneutic principle based on Husserl's search for understanding of the experience of consciousness can be defined as

"a way to interpret the shared meanings and practices that we may have for our experiences within a context" (Maloney, 1993).

The hermeneutic [dialectical] process searches for individual constructions, which are collected hermeneutically through the interaction between the researcher and the individual and interpreted using hermeneutic techniques, and compared dialectically (Travis, 1999). The process is made up of four elements (Dawson, 2002)

1. The individual
2. The continual movement between the data collection and analysis
3. Emerging findings from the individual's constructions
4. The emerging design

In adopting a purely hermeneutic approach a fifth element must be made explicit i.e. the researcher.

The primary tool of data collection within this research was the researcher, taking the indwelling posture of 'human as instrument' (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Indwelling enables the researcher to see the world from the individual's perspective reflecting not only on what she observes and discovers at that point in the research but also what she already understands. (Joyes et al, 1998). The researcher therefore could not deny her own presence and tacit understanding she would bring to the study, her understanding being embedded within the specific context of the physical community and *new space*.

Charmaz's (2000) discourse in support of a constructivist approach to a grounded theory, identifies the requirement of a relationship between the researcher and the respondent. As a general framework to develop theory and guide analysis grounded theory requires the reduction of the data into units and the subsequent reconstruction of those units. In contrast to this and

fundamental to the hermeneutic perspective is the hermeneutic circle or cycle which supports the understanding of the

“complex whole from the preconceptions about the meanings of its parts and interrelationships” (Klein and Meyers, 1998).

This cycle of interpretation reveals the process of understanding. It is impossible to understand any one part or element of a situation without understanding the whole. It is also impossible to understand the whole without an understanding of the parts or elements (Mallery et al, 1987).

The hermeneutic circle or cycle is a continual process of engagement between the whole and its parts – and the parts and the whole – a cyclical process negating the need for final interpretation. (Kinchloe and McLaren, 1994; Gallagher, 1992, Peters and Lankshear, 1994). Hermeneutics seeks understanding and meaning of the ‘whole’ by resisting objectification to reveal truth and further interpretation phenomenologically (Parker and Roffey, 1996).

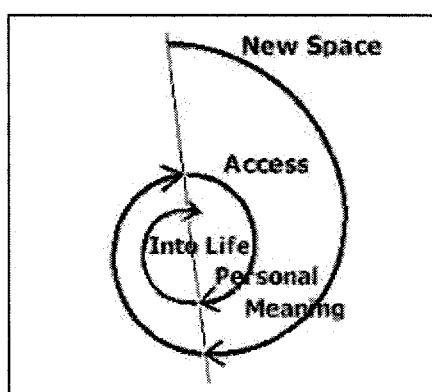
Within this research the hermeneutic perspective is concerned with constructing knowledge through experience. That is the experience in the environment of *new space*, of value (the phenomenon under investigation) and the awareness of the researcher’s self-reflecting on her own and the individuals’ constructions to develop new forms of linguistic reality in order to expand the vocabulary of understanding within the research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Kelle, 1997).

As interpretivism suggests there is no objective knowledge independent of thinking and reasoning individuals and, as a result the gathered knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation. Constructivism takes this one step further in that knowledge and truth are the result of a perspective and in that all truths are relative to specific context and or perspectives (Gephart, 1994 in Schwandt, 1994). The relationship between hermeneutics and interpretivism seeks understanding of a subjective reality, the actors and their actions including those of the observer i.e. the researcher

“so too must the observation and interpretation of the researcher be constructivist” (Neyland, 1992).

The hermeneutic perspective, acknowledges the researcher's worldview, her role within the research and the pursuit of understanding in context, as opposed to 'universals' of truth and meaning (Willis, 2000).

Taking a hermeneutic perspective and applying the hermeneutic circle as a framework for analysis implied that a reduction or breaking down of the data into component parts would not be possible if understanding was to be achieved phenomenologically i.e. to explore the individual's **personal** perceptions, meanings and understanding of the experience of *new space* being conscious of the whole.



The aim of Joyce Love's (1994) study into the subjective understanding medical couples [partners] have of their own lives was to achieve an 'emic' understanding through the voices and experiences of the couples themselves. This, Love determined, was only possible through a hermeneutic or phenomenological methodology (Love, 1994).

Figure IV: Hermeneutic Cycle, *new space* to Personal Meaning; Adapted from Routio, 2003

For this research Love's (1994) application of the hermeneutic circle, Gergen's (1988) notion of 'the dance', the continual movement of partners and their relatedness, and Geertz' (1983) concept of the circle as an

*“intellectual movement,...a conceptual rhythm...a continuous dialectical tacking between the most **local of local** detail and the most **global of global** structure” (Geertz, 1983) (Researcher's emphasis).*

were modified and applied as a tool. The researcher modified and applied Love's application of the Hermeneutic cycle, in particular Gergen's concept of the dance to maintain the continual and complex movement between the

individual (the local) and the community provision and policy influences (the global), in order to achieve an holistic understanding.

The researcher identified with Love's (1994) account of her 'struggle' to use a hermeneutic methodology with the challenge of interpreting her interviews. Love needed to determine what was important to discuss in the transcripts and identified differences, which she termed '*features of significance*' and comprised of *repetition, affect, history, explicit/implicit* and *serendipity*. Using these features and building on her own tacit knowledge and understanding Love, identified themes emerging from the data.

"Some might say that anything said by an analyst is a bias or a prejudice. Another voice e.g. Gadamer, 1976 might celebrate the inner dialogue of the researcher and encourage the author to include such pondering text. In the spirit of this voice I have chosen ...ways to voice the themes" (Love, 1994).

Employing Love's (1994) '*features of significance*', and guided by the research's three overarching objectives of *Lifelong learning, ICTs and new space*, concepts, themes and ideas were explored and identified. Initially Love's features (*repetition, explicit/implicit, affect, historical and serendipity*) were set against the four elements of value construction, i.e. *information seeking process, context, mode of access and use* (Figure V). The adapted '*features of significance*' were used to identify the following:

- **Repetition**, looked for ideas, issues, understandings, commonalities and shared themes that were repeated across all the individual case studies.
- **Explicit/Implicit** features were used to identify interpretations, the recorded connections between individual respondent's thoughts and activities; for example decision making in the DVA seeking process or the context in which participation occurs.
- In Love's study **Affect** included non-verbal cues, however in the context of this research and the electronic data collection, *affect* was used to identify statements of personal meaning or emotive language

and phrases. Smith (1999) uses narrative poems in his ethnographic study of persons with developmental disabilities based on a “nam shub” a Sumerian term meaning “*speech with magical force*” (Smith, 1999, p.245). Although this research did not employ a narrative method of data collection and interpretation, the analysis was used to identify aspects and characteristics in the individual's speech and words of both an uplifting and/or negative nature.

- **Historical** features identified descriptions or commentary of past experiences that explained, justified or rationalised present behaviour or understanding.
- **Serendipity** accounted for the unexpected and allowed the research and the researcher to respond to ideas or findings that were different to her own understanding and experience (Love, 1994).

Such a visual mapping and representation allowed the researcher to identify quickly those emerging themes across all 53 individual cases (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

<div><div><i>Element</i></div><div><i>Feature</i></div></div>	Information Seeking Process	Context	Access	Use
Affect				
Explicit/Implicit				
Historical				
Serendipity				

Figure V: Features of Significance/Value Matrix, Adapted from Love (1994)

4.4: Context

A naturalistic orientation does not deal with scientific generalisations but with contextual findings, discovering meanings in the data gathered and not behavioural statistics (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

Context is

"the pattern that connects, communication necessitates context...without context there is no meaning" (Bateson, 1978, p.10).

That natural setting, the individual's own environment, their physical community space, became the context for the research. The researcher's aim was to acquire an understanding in all its complexity of *new space* the use by individuals of computers to view visual art in a physical community space. Understanding this situation as constructed by those participants allowed insight into the individual's actions, reactions, thinking and language, which are indicative of how they perceive and interpret their own reality (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The fundamental ethos of the naturalistic inquiry is that the subjects of the inquiry are inextricably bound up in interrelationships that shape their realities. As established in Chapter 3 context enriches and limits the data; context drives towards specificity, whilst the accumulation of specific detail provided by context describes these intricate interrelationships that convey the researcher into the setting. (Erlandson et al, 1993). This particular approach was used with care as not to

"undermine the validity of the observations by isolating them from the environment that gives them meaning" (Sutton, 1993, p.412).

4.5: Qualitative Approach

This research had at its centre the individual, based upon the fundamental understanding that societal issues are constructed by the individual's own interpretation. As qualitative research is concerned with how individuals make sense of their world, it was utilised to *"strive for a depth of understanding as an end in itself..."* (Patton, 1990, p.17.) showing *"a direct concern with experience as it is lived or felt or undergone"* (Sherman and Webb, 1988, p.2).

4.6: Design

"Online or offline, all of us make sense of our experiences and tell stories of our lives in self-centred and self-understood ways"
(Markham, 1998).

It is those very stories that this research sought in order to achieve an understanding of value and the use of *new space*. A rich, descriptive, holistic account (Burns, 2000) was needed to offer new insights and understanding into the concept of value and *new space* therefore a case study approach was taken. The issues of access to this *new space* for visual art i.e. a contemporary phenomena in a community, a real life context determined that a case study approach was appropriate.

Focussing on a geographically bounded case study site, holistic, in-depth case studies based on qualitative data were used to produce descriptive data that could be transferred to other situations based on their contextual applicability (Pickard, 2002). The metropolitan borough of Gateshead (GMBC), Tyne and Wear in the North East of England was chosen as a suitable case study site, in particular within that bounded geographical area Gateshead's Library and Arts Service, which is discussed in further detail in 4.10.

The case studies were rooted in the relevant implementation framework of national, regional and organisational policy directly influencing provision and resources in particular

- Government policy documentation on Lifelong Learning and ICTs; including *Learning for the Twenty-first Century* (DfEE, 1997); *Recent Thinking in Lifelong Learning* (Edwards et al, 1998); *Informal Learning and Widening Participation* (DfEE, 2000); *Education Strategic development Plan 1999 – 2002* (GMBC, 1999); *Culture and Creativity the Next Ten Years* (DCMS, 2001); *Renaissance in the Regions* (Resource, 2003)

- The Government Policy Action Team 10 Report (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 1999)
- The regional cultural strategy documentation (Culture NorthEast, 2001).
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (1999) document *Towards 2010; A vision for Gateshead*
- GMBC Library Plan (Library Arts and Information) 1999-2001
- Building Bridges (2002) *A Strategy for Culture in NewcastleGateshead 2002-2012*. Newcastle Council, Gateshead Council.

The emergent design of the research permitted the development of the case study, meaning being determined by the context, i.e. the community and the existence of multiple realities of individual respondents providing insight into their own reality, prohibiting a design based on only one construction.

The nature of this study, descriptive using a multiple case study design and exploratory due to the lack of knowledge in this particular field, allowed cross-case analysis to capture the situation as a whole. Holistic case studies rather than embedded case studies were identified as being the most appropriate (Yin, 1984). Providing insight into multiple realities through the intensive study of a single setting, i.e. a community using multiple case studies of individual respondents, supported the “*particularist view that every case is unique*” (Sutton, 1993, p.12).

Figure VI provides an overview of the multiple case study design. It details each facet and provides a time line illustrating the emerging non-sequential research process and development of the researcher’s thinking and rationale. A holistic view of the developmental processes involved in this research is discussed further in Chapter 9 and illustrated in Figure XXXVI (page 261).

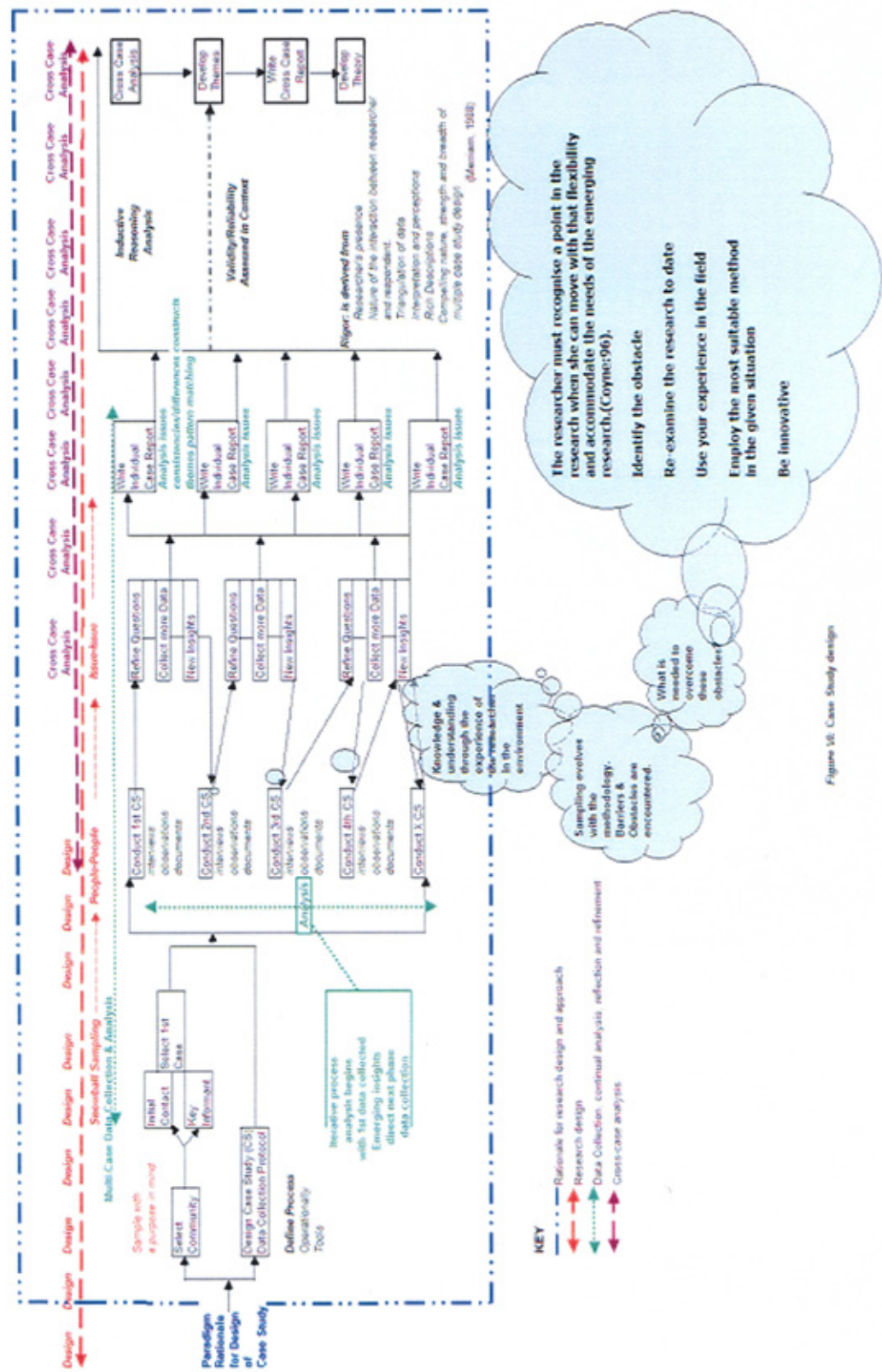


Figure 16: Case Study design

Figure VI Case Study Design

4.7: Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness establishes credibility in the truth of the findings, their consistency, neutrality, worthiness and applicability, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Robson, 1993).

Lincoln and Guba determine that the fundamental question regarding trustworthiness in a constructivist inquiry is,

"How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?"
(Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p301.).

Lincoln and Guba suggest the criteria for establishing trustworthiness are *credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Transferability is the degree to which the reader can transfer the research experience and findings to other contexts, settings and individuals. Qualitative research does not maintain that knowledge gained within a particular context will be relevant to another but may occur by the identification of shared characteristics (Erlandson et al, 1993). In this research the rich descriptions and purposive sampling maximising the information obtained about the particular context, facilitated transferability. The observations of the research were defined by the specific context (*new space*) in which they occur. The hermeneutic approach makes explicit the viewpoint and biases of the researcher.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) determine that there is no "**credibility** without **dependability**" therefore the method and technique in relation to credibility should dispel the requirement that dependability be demonstrated separately. Credibility in this research was established by the triangulation of methods and sources, the study of the individual in a specific context, physical community spaces, direct engagement and persistent observation, discussion

with individuals and prolonged observation in those *new space* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

One of the three principles of collecting data for case studies, as recommended by Yin (1984) and employed in this research study, was multiple sources of data. Each source and type of data has particular strengths and weaknesses Figure VII (page 72) details the various data sources accessed and their individual characteristics (Yin, 1994; Patton, 1990; Tellis, 1997). Employing a multiple approach and sources to data collection counteracted the limitations of a single approach, strengthening the trustworthiness of the study and findings.

Confirmability and therefore dependability is achieved through maintaining a chain of evidence, an exhaustive audit trail, applying Yin's (1984) six primary sources of evidence (Figure VII) establishing the importance of multiple sources of data in the trustworthiness of the research (Stake, 1985). Confirmability ensues in the research findings and in the demonstration of their interpretation emerging from the data. In this research confirmability has been further achieved by the development of a tool in the form of an electronic hypertext document (EHD) permitting the inclusion of all (raw) data sets and hyperlinks to demonstrate the relationships between findings, literature and raw data.

Throughout the research rigour was derived from,

- The researcher's presence and the nature of the interaction between the researcher, the individual and *new space*.
- Triangulation of the rich data and thick descriptions, their interpretation and perceptions.
- The design of the case study.
- The strength, breadth and compelling nature of multiple case studies.
- The creation and use of the electronic hypertext document tool providing a dynamic and visible audit trail.

And thus trustworthiness was established.

Sources of Evidence	Strengths	Weaknesses
Documentation	Stable repeated review Unobtrusive exist prior to case study Exact names etc. Broad coverage - extended time span	Retrievability difficult Biased selectivity Reporting bias, author bias Access may be blocked
Archival Records	As above Precise	As above Privacy may inhibit access
Interviews	Targeted focus on case study phenomena Insightful-provides perceived casual inferences	Bias due to poor questions Response bias Incomplete recollection Reflexivity interviewee expresses what interviewer wants to hear
Direct Observation	Reality - covers events in real time Contextual - covers events context	Time consuming Selectivity, might miss facts Reflexivity, observer's presence might cause change
Participant Observation	As above Insightful into interpersonal behaviour	As above Bias due to researcher's actions
Physical Artefacts	Insightful into cultural features Insightful into technical operations	Selectivity Availability

Figure VII: Evidence, Strengths and Weakness
Adapted from Yin 1994 in Tellis 1997

4.8: Sample

The initial design identified that a purposive sample would be built by maximum variation using the snowball sampling technique where one respondent leads to another (Erlandson et al, 1993). Therefore the strategy of maximum variation would be emergent and sequential, enabling the research to capture unique variations that emerged in differing conditions.

A major concern in naturalistic inquiry is the desire not to generalise but to maximise the discovery of "*heterogeneous patterns and problems that occur in the particular context under study*" (Erlandson et al, 1993, p82.). The aim was to study those who represent the greatest difference providing a range of experience within *new space* and not generalizability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It was anticipated that fieldwork would be carried out over a duration of nine months in 12-week periods to allow for anomalies or changes in the individual's life pattern providing evidence in a real-life context.

4.8.1: Sample Size

A priori could not be set to the sample size. Lincoln and Guba (1985) estimate that emergent and sequential sampling can reach saturation point with as few as twelve respondents and no more than twenty. A relatively small sample can produce great diversity, detailed information and rich descriptions.

In quantitative studies sample size is crucial in maintaining the rigour of the findings. In the constructivist inquiry evidence is collected and analysed on an ongoing basis until no more new information is collected (Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994), that is until saturation point is reached. Saturation point would be balanced with other factors in the research design such as time and access. When no new information is added to the inquiry by new respondents the fieldwork ceases as information redundancy is reached (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

4.8.2: Sample Identification

Initial contact was made with a key informant within the identified physical community space, Gateshead Central Library, Tyne and Wear, who directed the line of inquiry to two further key informants and established context for the study. Following discussions with the key informants it was understood that the informants would lead directly to information rich cases and those subsequent respondents would lead onto further information rich cases. It was agreed that the developing *new space* within Gateshead Central Library, its current use and the breadth and nature of the resources available on the

World Wide Web (the Web) provided a likely opportunity for the researcher to engage with users of the *new space* and DVA.

4.9: Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection aims to gather thick descriptions, recreating the situation and as much of its context in the phenomenon. Qualitative data collection aims to provide

“a comprehensive, holistic portrayal of the social and cultural dimensions of a particular context” (Erlandson et al, 1993, p.82).

For this particular case study (Gateshead) it was the varying dimensions of the context i.e. *new space* that necessitated the employment of such data collection.

The holistic approach examines the global nature of the phenomena under investigation and this is achieved by using multiple case studies of individual respondents to provide insight to multiple realities. This would not be achieved if a strategy of embedded case studies were employed as the embedded case approach focuses only on the *“sub-unit level and fails to return to the larger unit”* (Erlandson et al, 1993, p.85). Therefore the research endeavoured to maintain at all times a holistic view i.e. the individual at the centre and consideration of the use of DVA within the wider context of the Learning Society, Lifelong Learning, the community, provision and resources as illustrated in Figure I (page 12).

Holistic case study design maintains that no cases under inquiry can be conducted at an abstract level (Cavalante, 1996). For each individual case study a rich illuminative picture was produced, including a detailed descriptive account of how and when the fieldwork was conducted (Wolcott, 1990). Within a multiple case study design Patton (1990) suggests that this is achieved by treating each case as unique within their particular context and associated relationship.

The rationale for the implementation of Yin's (1984) three principles of data collection for case studies (Figure VIII) was the triangulation of evidence and increased reliability not only in the findings but also in the method of collection.

Yin's (1984) Three Principles of Data Collection	
Multiple sources of data	Documentation, Archival Documents, Physical artefacts, Interviews, Observation (participant, direct)
Case Study Database	Data, Documentation, Case study report
Audit Trail	Chain of evidence, a continuum from the initial research question to the research conclusion.

Figure VIII: Yin's (1984) Three Principles of Data Collection

The researcher took a reflective and interpretative approach to data collection. Employing this reflective practice as she carried out the variety of research activities permitted increased attention to the context, allowing re-formulation of practice, perceptions and understanding (Willis, 2000).

Schon (1987), whose approach is an interpretive-constructive epistemology relates reflective practice to the constructivist view of the reality the researcher deals with,

"a view that leads us to see the practitioner as constructing situations of [her] practice, not only in the exercise of professional artistry but also in all other modes of professional competence" (Cavalcante, 1996, p.3).

4.9.1: The Researcher, A Tool for Data Collection

Trustworthiness is the function of the credibility of the researcher's knowledge, claims and acknowledgement of her central role (Merriam, 1988). The researcher can indwell in a human activity because of human plurality i.e. the *"condition of being distinct and equal to other humans"* (Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994, p.28). This condition allowed the researcher as instrument to gain understanding and immerse herself within the context of *new space*.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) determine that human as instrument has a number of advantages for data collection, which in the context of this research are shown in Figure IX below.

Advantage (Lincon and Guba 1985)	Particular To The Study
<i>Responsiveness to the environment</i>	A public space requires the researcher to adjust daily according to the activities and those individuals occupying that particular space.
<i>Adaptability to re-plan the target of focus on the spot</i>	Working under the premise that each individual is unique this was a crucial advantage permitting the researcher to pursue issues, themes and discussions as they were presented.
<i>Holistic emphasis to perceive the phenomena and its surroundings as a whole, knowledge base expansion the awareness of what is explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge simultaneously</i>	Permitted prolonged engagement in the community space, i.e. initially the PC access area in Gateshead Central Library. Further developing the researcher's tacit knowledge of the space as a member of the community and through observation making explicit the use of this space by individual community members. Supported by the researcher's activity using the space as a community member.
<i>Processual immediacy the ability to process and respond to data immediately including the opportunity for clarification, summarisation feeding back to the respondents to clarify or embellish</i>	Employing informal interviews – conversations with meaning permitted points to be clarified with the individual and also the Library and local authority. Allowing for the checking of policies, strategies and staff understanding as particular issues arose.
<i>Exploration of the atypical response permits the human as instrument to achieve a greater understanding through data that would under quantitative research methods be discarded.</i>	Body language, movement within <i>new space</i> , images and their use and manipulation were collected and observed.

Figure IX: Advantages of the Researcher as a Tool for Data Collection

4.9.2: A Model for Data Collection: A Sense-Making Approach

Dervin's Sense-Making theory (Dervin, 1983) has been applied in studies of information, communication and library science, in particular qualitative studies of information seeking and use focussing on the individual and the

issue of access. In respect of this research, the use of the integrative model, based on Dervin's situation-gap-use triangle, the time line interview and help chain, was explored as suitable as one of the tools for data collection.

The concept of sense-making is based on the tenet that

"humans generally seek information when they encounter an obstacle, or gap, of some kind that they see as a block in their life path" Sense-making "confronts the gap by attending to key elements the situation involved, the gap encountered, the bridge constructed to traverse the gap, and the helps/utilities that resulted in bridging the gap" (Higgins, 1997).

The process of sense-making is constructed on a "time-line" interview. This is an open-ended interview that allows the subjects to construct a view of the world from their own perspective (Higgins, 1997). The interview focuses on the gap, what is needed to bridge that gap and the help required. The interviewer also considers the significance of the event to the interviewee.

"Sense-Making focuses on the individual, it does not rest on an individualistic theory of human action. Rather, it assumes that structure, culture, community, organization are created, maintained, reified, challenged, changed, resisted, and destroyed IN COMMUNICATION and can only be understood by focusing on the individual-in-context, including social context" (Higgins, 1997).

Dervin's *help chain* approach is a particularly relevant method of data collection. It focuses on the subject's perception and connection to *"information/system/structure and self"* (Dervin, 1995). The questions are constructed and repeated in a chain until the statement is reconstituted into the most *"personal and life-relevant terms"* (Dervin, 1992, p.61).

Theory building was emergent. Using Dervin's situation-gap-use triangle the theory was orientated to *"a specific set of substantive research questions...providing a general model of the research object"* (Pettigrew et al, 1999, p.328).

Pettigrew et al (1999) believe that this theory can be “empirically” tested when placed in a social context and related to the concepts of the social phenomena under investigation. Pettigrew et al applied Dervin's sense-making approach to their study of public library networked community information (Pettigrew et al 1999). Their mapping of fieldwork concepts onto Dervin's sense-making theory was liberally adapted for the purpose of this research. This mapping was used to produce six points to define the key concepts and specifications of the research questions to assist the development of the interview guide and to ensure that the data collected would answer the research questions. The key concepts were specified as follows:

- The individual's situation.
- Gaps, Motivation, Information Skills, Access.
- The Process of Visual Art Information seeking.
- Use the individual makes of the Access, Information Skills.
- What was involved to aid the individual.
- The Experience as understood by the Individual.

Liberally adapted from Pettigrew, Durrance and Vakkari, 1999.

The key concepts were then used to develop the source and methods matrix (Figure XI) and the interview questions (Appendix II).

4.9.3: The Data Collected

The data collected transcended the customary biases that are often present in traditional face-to-face interviewing (Selwyn and Robson, 1998). These biases and stereotypical concepts of age, race gender and class do not necessarily apply when communicating electronically (Selwyn & Robson, 1998; Spender, 1995). For many the appeal to communicate electronically or 'exist' partially in an electronic virtual environment is to be free of these stereotypes and be foremost an individual. Therefore the decision was made not to collect demographic or personal data and that the 'essence' of the individual within the *new space* would emerge from the data itself.

However it is acknowledged that the growth of the Internet and electronic communication on a global scale raises concerns of identity and anonymity with regard to the safety and protection of particular groups (Kabay, 1998). This notion of identity was not part of the research's remit nor did the researcher encounter any negative or anti – social behaviour during data collection.

The intention of this research was neither to be comparative nor evaluative but rather to at first describe the reality of the individual within *new space* in order to gain insight into value as understood by the individual.

4.9.4: Data Analysis

An inductive approach was taken to data analysis i.e. there were no predetermined variables or categories set against the data, rather elements that became important to analyse emerged from the data itself (Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994). Analysis of the data was an iterative process, a hermeneutic cycle beginning with the first data collected. In this cycle the researcher moved back and forward between the elements of the transcripts text and the whole text extending this process to all data collected, e.g. documents, observation and discussion with key informants (Tesch, 1990; Ayres, 2003; Iser, 1980). This enabled, in the first phase of the research, to discover and develop recurring or repeating notions, commonalities and relationships.

Drawing on the aims and objectives and the issues emerging from the research a thematic framework was developed to identify key issues, concepts, and themes by which the data could be examined and referenced (Pope, et al, 2000). The development of this framework produced a detailed index of the sets of data and the themes to which they were directly related. The themes linked to their respective and corresponding data sets are displayed in Figure X. Each data set is linked to the theme that it would inform. A dashed line for example from the data set *documents* to the themes

value and *culture* indicates that the documents would be used to contextualise rather than directly inform an understanding of value and culture.

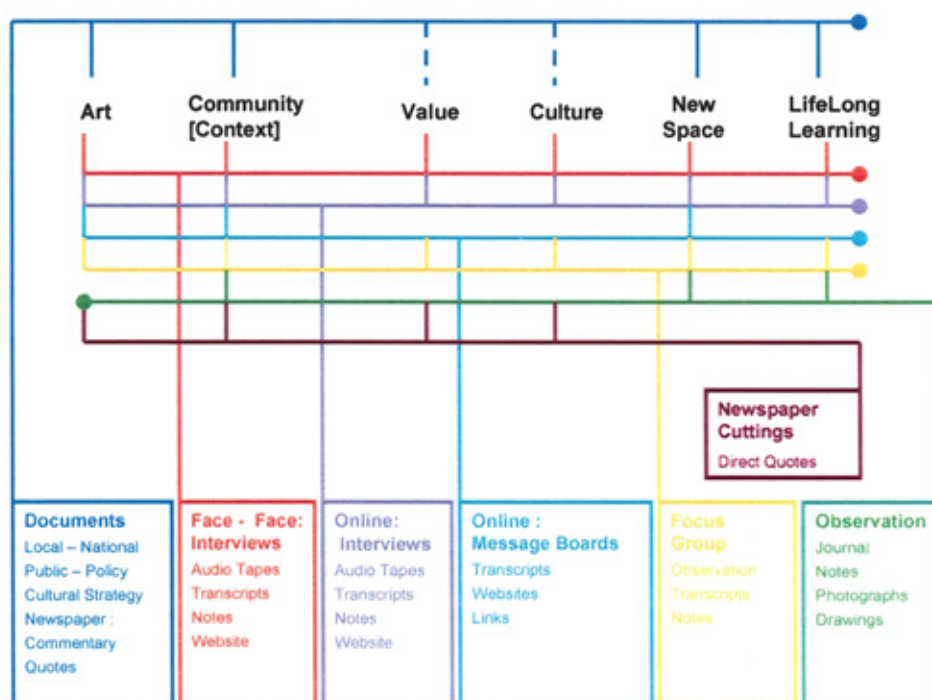


Figure X: Data Sets and Themes

This framework was then used to map out the specific aims and objectives against the multiple methods of data collection and sources to verify which sources would answer the particular research questions (Figure XI). For example to explore the innovation of *new space* for DVA in relation to the development of the concept of the cultural and social in everyday life, policy and documents at government, regional and organisational level were used to inform the commitment structure and support mechanisms for such ideology and activity. Interviews with respondents by email, research web site, face to face, discussion boards and the focus group provided data on the respondents' own particular use of *new space* and understanding of culture in an everyday context. Observation and the second generation "What is Culture" quotations were used for context.

Question	Method	Policy	Documents	Observation	The Media	Second Generation Quotation	DVA Sites	E H D
Lifelong Learning		✓	✓					
Experience		✓	✓					✓
Leisure		✓	✓					
Visual Art-Learning		✓	✓					
DVA Learning Social Function								
ICTs – new space								
Cultural –social in everyday life		✓		✓		✓		
Network of Resources		✓		✓				
Motivation Access								
Public Providers		✓	✓	✓				✓
Relationships				✓				✓
Use and Access								
Provision		✓	✓					
Access		✓	✓					✓
Barriers		✓	✓					
Understanding Culture					✓	✓		
Identified Community					✓	✓		
Understanding Value								✓
Question	Method	E-mail Interviews	Web Interviews	Discussion Board	GHead Interview	F Group Face Face	F Group Web Based	
Lifelong Learning								
Experience		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Leisure		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Visual Art-Learning		✓	✓	✓				
DVA Learning Social Function		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
ICTs – new space								
Cultural –social in everyday life		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Network of Resources								
Motivation Access		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Public Providers			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Relationships		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Use and Access								
Provision		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Access		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Barriers		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Understanding Culture		✓	✓					
Identified Community		✓						
Understanding Value		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

KEY:

Policy – National/Regional, Documents – Organisation , Ghead – Gateshead , F – Focus Group, EHD– Creation of Electronic Document Tool

Figure XI: Source and Methods Matrix

After careful consideration Atlas*TI qualitative data analysis software was selected to facilitate the activities involved in qualitative analysis and support the interpretation of text and images (Muhr, 1997). This software offered the ability to map out a visual depiction of the data links and theoretical ideas in the form of non-hierarchical relationships and the processing and coding of visual data, which forms part of the evidence. Unlike NUD*ST, Atlas*TI allows continued online coding and the facility to alter coding. Hypertext links can be created between data, codes and documents

4.9.5: Working with the Data

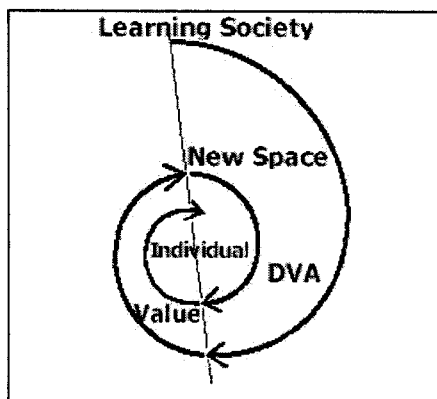
The goal of hermeneutics is to seek understanding; in qualitative research context-relatedness and ambiguity (i.e. an uncertainty of meaning in words or phrases that cannot be readily determined from context) have been regarded as central characteristics within such philosophical approaches (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Kelle, 1997).

Kelle (1997), Denzin and Lincoln (1994) have given further consideration to these particular characteristics by determining that it is impossible to make sense and therefore difficult to gain understanding of text and spoken words in '*everyday contexts*' without tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is the knowledge people carry in their minds and which is therefore difficult to access. It is this [tacit] knowledge that cannot be easily captured or expressed that lies at the core of hermeneutic *understanding* (Kelle, 1997).

The application of data analysis software requires a certain treatment and formulation of rules to the data. Applying such rules to human (hermeneutic) understanding can be problematic. Therefore to support the emerging themes and coding of the data a combination of the data analysis software (Atlas*TI) and an adaptation of Love's (1994) *Features of Significance* as discussed in 4.3 were used to map out a visual depiction of the data links and theoretical ideas in the form of non-hierarchical relationships. Love (1994) identified that within the hermeneutic circle there is an internal dialogue in which the researcher is continually using "*metaphors, explanatory principles, and prior knowledge*" (Love, 1994), including tacit knowledge to understand what is

read or heard. This articulation of this internal dialogue enabled the identification of themes and those relationships to be “coded” in meaningful terms. ‘In vivo’ coding was applied, using the words of the respondents to code the data and in doing so endeavour to capture through those meaningful words an element of tacit knowledge.

Each individual case was examined and the transcripts carefully read and re-read, the *features of significance/value* matrix (Figure V) was used to identify initial themes before transferring the data into the Atlas*ti data analysis software. Once placed in the Atlas*ti workspace each case was explored building on the *features of significance/value* matrix to identify and develop the major concepts of the research question as defined in the three research aims that is, *Lifelong Learning, Use and Access*, ICTs and *new space*. From these concepts further themes were developed based on the research objectives and thus maintaining the principles of analysis using the hermeneutic circle.



Where items of interest were identified memos were made recording reflective notes about what the researcher was learning from the data. Quotations and transcription extracts that were considered interesting or important were created.

Figure XII: Hermeneutic Cycle The Learning Society to The Individual; Adapted from Routio, 2003

Taking full advantage of the features offered by the data analysis software it was possible to review data across all cases to discover and identify recurring or repeating notions, commonalities and relationships in the data. So as not to work in the abstract the identification of themes and relationships were “coded” using meaningful terms generated from the research and the

researcher's own understanding. The ability to link and make relationships to the primary documents, quotations, memos and themes furthered the research aim to work with the data as a contextual whole. Figure XIII *Working with the Data* details an example of the grouping, concepts and themes offered by the software. The network view in Figure XIV (page 86) considers the diverse nature of DVA as viewed and searched by the research respondents. At the centre a memo is displayed identified by the symbol



in which notes on the nature of the DVA viewed were recorded. The memo is linked to primary documents i.e. interviews, newspaper cuttings (identified by the prefix P) and in this particular network commentary from a BBC radio 4 programme that discussed visual art and was used for context. Themes (e.g. *ethos of lifelong learning*, *access to DVA*) and their relationship to each other were also included in the network.

Appendix III explores the relationship between the individual and the learning society and demonstrates a more detailed view of the primary documents, quotations, memos and themes. The ability to work with the primary documents in this way enabled linking of emerging themes directly to respondents' quotations and the researcher's own interpretation by memo at the time of analysis.

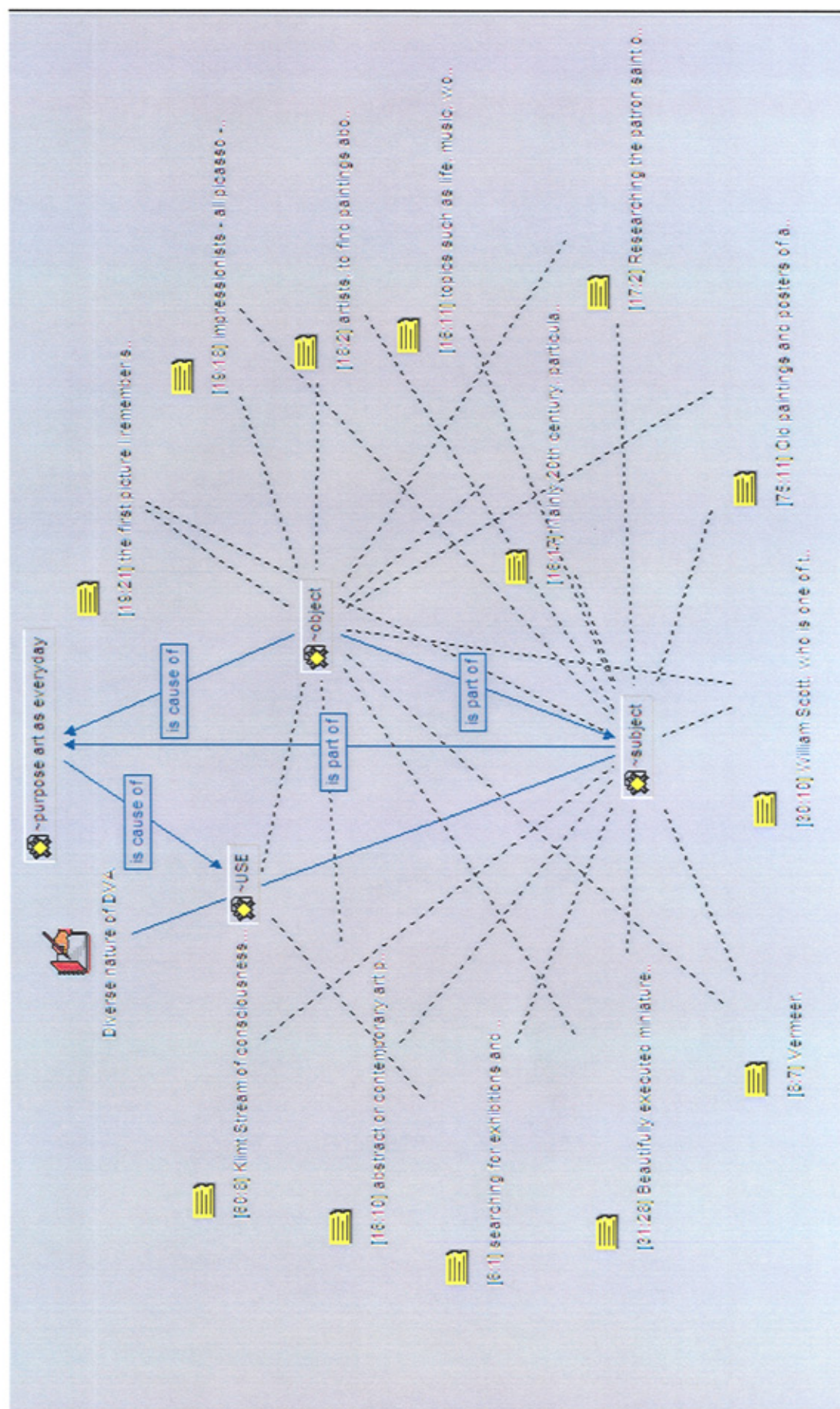


Figure XIII: Working with the Data

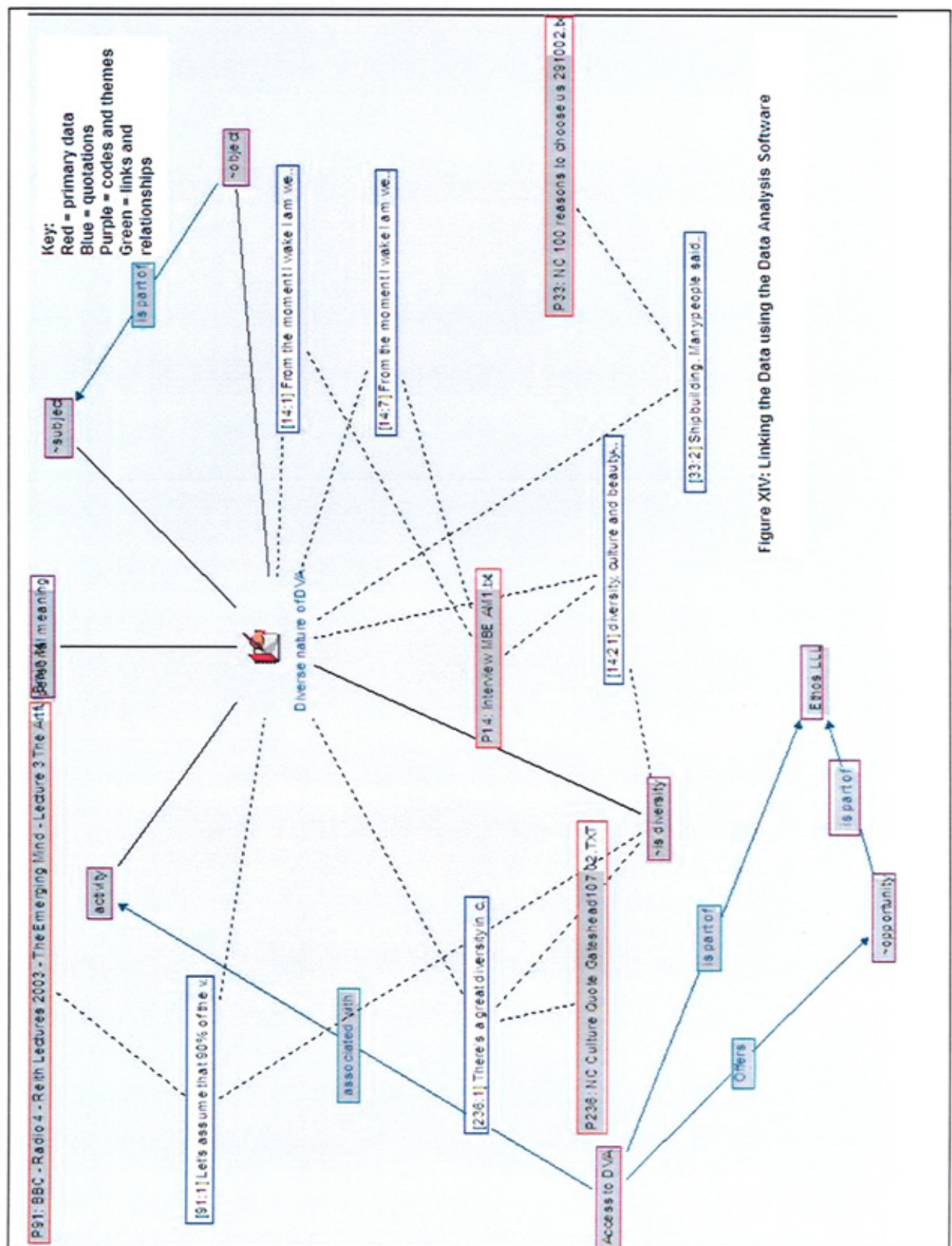


Figure XIV: Linking the Data using the Data Analysis Software

Figure XIV: Linking the Data using the Data Analysis Software

4.10: Phase I - Case Study One

The case study was designed as an intensive study of a single setting, a pre-defined geographically bounded community, using multiple case studies of individual respondents living within that community who make use of community Personal Computer (PC) network spaces. This multiple case study design offered the opportunity for cross-case analysis with the aim of providing insight into the multiple realities of the individuals within the chosen community (Yin, 1984). Community in this context was defined as a group of people *“living in a particular local area”* (Dictionary.com, 2004).

4.10.1: Criteria For Choosing the Case Study: A Community

Selection of the case study site was dependent on three key elements ***resources, vision and role.***

Resources:	The community had an established and provided public access to an electronic network
Vision:	The community recognised and actively engaged and supported cultural and creative activity.
Role:	Demonstrated a role central to the community and was active in that role

Each of the three key elements were further broken down into particular attributes and qualities.

Resources
A fully operational electronic network.
Actively engaged in bringing the Information /Learning Society to the region.
Perception of the network as a facet of the national/northern grid for learning.
Cultural Content.
Recognise the potential of such networks to lifelong learning, culture, history and local studies.
Awareness of ICT and access issues.
Global dimension.
Vision
Pro-active in the arts.
Aware of the relevance and potential of the arts socially, culturally and in learning.
Commitment to continual development of community related art activity.
Role
Committed to and actively endeavour to meet the needs of the community.
Recognise the importance of the locale.
Acknowledge community diversity.

Figure XV: Key Elements. Selection of A Case Study: Gateshead

Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (GMBC), Tyne and Wear satisfied all three criteria. "*Gateshead Council is a local authority with a tradition of innovation in cultural matters*" (Liberator Project, 2004). Gateshead covers 55 square miles and extends 12.6 miles along the South bank of the River Tyne and is the largest of the five Tyne and Wear districts (GMBC, 2004). It has a population of approximately 191,177 with 87,000 households living in densely populated urban areas in the East and Centre and the more rural districts in the West (GMBC, 2004).

In terms of **resources** a fully operational and developing electronic network was in place. Gateshead libraries and arts service was actively engaged in bringing the information-learning society into the region ahead of market forces and as a facet of the Northern Grid for Learning, providing a gateway to educationally valuable content, developing an infrastructure in schools, libraries and higher and further education institutions to support access and the provision of training (NI, 1999; NGfL 1998, 2004).

GMBC was committed to the development of arts and arts related programmes in the community. It is the **vision** and foresight of GMBC that acknowledged the relevance and importance of the arts, culture and creativity in learning within their own community and the concept of a SMART region, (discussed in detail in Chapter 6) in the development and regeneration of the area (Holmes, 2001).

The **role** of GMBC was in actively endeavouring to meet the needs of the community whilst acknowledging diversity and the importance of the locale (GMBC, 1998, 2000). The aim of the strategy Beyond 2010 (GMBC, 1999) was to enable each member of the community to realise his or her own potential by providing the best quality of life in a healthy, safe and sustainable environment, including widening participation and opportunity for lifelong learning and leisure (GMBC, 1999).

Gateshead Central Library was identified as a primary point of access within the community, a familiar environment used by a varied section of the local population – a community space. Libraries have long been identified as being at the heart of the communities they serve providing the widest possible access to a range of services and resources (Library Association, 1997). Libraries are recognised in the public identity of the community, providing access to those who otherwise may not develop the use of new resources (Das, 2000).

Primarily, users of the library service were required to be residents of Gateshead and at this point in the research the Central Library, Gateshead led in provision of PC, Internet and network access therefore it was considered the most appropriate point of access to the sample.

4.10.2: Field Work

Field work was carried out through observation and interviews.

Exploratory, non-participant **observation** was employed to initiate an understanding of the community space i.e. the natural environment and the individual within. The researcher identified her role as semi-participant, acknowledging the effect of her presence within the environment while attempting to gain the 'insider's perspective' (Jorgensen, 1989). Throughout the period of observation the focus was directed onto a number of areas to enable understanding of the individuals, their interaction, activity, feeling and movement within the space. A detailed diagram of each physical space was created and the individual's movement within that space recorded on an observation sheet.

Evidence gathered from this period of observation was used to inform the design of the second phase of the research and build contextually on a number of issues developed in the literature review and dependent upon that understanding of the physical space including,

- Concept of value.

- *new space* – the virtual within the physical, for visual art and the individual.
- Lifelong learning as a societal role.
- Informal places of learning.
- Community.

Initial data collection began in the first phase of the research through semi-structured **interviews**. Short focused interviews using open-ended questions developed from the case study protocol¹ were used to create a conversation with purpose, discovering information from the individual's own interpretation (Lauder, 1993). An interview guide was developed and used as a framework to focus the interview and maintain the purpose of the research.

Building on the research key concepts and the Research Question Specification (4.9.2), a list of substantive questions was developed reflecting the inquiry and some specific questions were identified to keep in mind when collecting data. This was used to serve as a prompt, keeping the researcher on track, and to identify potential sources of information for answering each research question as detailed in the Source and Methods Matrix (Figure XI).

Documents were collected and consulted. Particularly relevant to this case study were a collection of quotations, cuttings collected daily for a 12 month period in 2002 from a regional newspaper, *The Newcastle Chronicle*. Each day the *Newcastle Chronicle* published quotations in varying numbers, ranging from 1 to 50; Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (GMBC) document Towards 2010; A vision for Gateshead; GMBC Library Plan (Library Arts and Information) 1999-2001; Building Bridges (2002) *A Strategy for Culture in NewcastleGateshead 2002-2012*. Newcastle Council, Gateshead

¹ The case study protocol was used as a flexible framework for fieldwork, employed as an instrument in data collection, and as guidance for procedures and for the laying down of general rules. The protocol employed such features as an overview of the case study, field procedures, case study questions, which were embedded in the case study report acting as a guide.

Council. The collection and use of these cuttings is discussed in further detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

Three modes of recording data were used. Firstly a **reflexive diary** was kept detailing why decisions were made, constraints, issues encountered, sampling and findings at every stage of the research, in order that the researcher achieve validity through the corroboration of a detailed account of the research (Meloy, 1994, Bowen; 1997). The diary was used solely as a tool for the researcher, in particular in the development and understanding of the paradigm in which this research was situated and the epistemological orientation of the researcher and her relationship with the context.

Second, extensive field notes were recorded in an **observation journal** making explicit the distinction between the observed and the researcher's interpretation. Field notes were based on Robson's (1993) observation framework recording:

- Layout of the physical setting.
- Relevant details of the individual's involved.
- Activities of those individuals.
- Specific individual actions.
- Particular occasions.
- The sequence of events.
- Emotions in particular context

The observation journal also recorded documentation that was obtained or discovered during the fieldwork session.

Third in Phase I of the research, interviews were recorded using **audio tapes**, and **observation notes** were made following the close of the interview. A transcription of each interview was produced including observation and the researcher's interpretation notes. Due to the emerging sample issues, interviews were primarily with users of the *new space only* (not DVA). Data

from these interviews was used for context and to conceptualise *new space* and its subsequent use.

4.10.3: Sampling Strategy - Access to the Community

Sampling in both qualitative and quantitative research is complex. The success of any research project is reliant on the effectiveness of the sample strategy. The sample for this research was set by a geographical boundary with criteria to establish those individuals who use computers in a community space to look at visual art. The aim was to sample with a purpose in mind and maximise the information yield (Patton, 1990; Trochim, 2001). Employing this type of sampling approach increased the probability that variables common in the phenomena would be represented in the data (Maykut and Moorhouse, 1994). The research acknowledged that purposive sampling was not an open hand of approval to pick a community group or site that the researcher just might happen upon, but to think critically and carefully apply criteria for the selection, as detailed in the case study protocol (Silverman, 2000). Guided by the initial observations and key informants, snowball sampling (people to people) was employed as the most appropriate approach given the established criteria (as detailed in 4.10.1) and the geographical boundary of the Gateshead community. The Central Library was identified as a base to carry out data collection and as a gateway to the community and potential sample including Library and Art Services staff who would act as key informants.

Once in the field the researcher discovered that the nature and dynamics of the physical and virtual spaces presented an unexpected element in sampling, in that the sample was proving almost impossible to find. During the period of exploratory observation the use of DVA resources was observed i.e. users of the PC open access area in the case study site viewing visual art images. But in the field the researcher observed that the dynamics of the virtual and physical space created a ripple in the sampling procedure denying the key informant fulfilment of his or her role. The informant could only point to the users or individuals occupying the *new space* without identifying the

purpose, content or subsequent use. It became increasingly apparent that the concept and use of that particular *new space* had been misinterpreted (by both the key informants and the researcher), presenting an obstacle to data collection at that site. The relationship between user and the virtual space began to emerge as an isolated process and activity. The interactions and relationships observed in the physical space were identified as not necessarily being directly linked to the focus of the resource being used in the virtual space. The user decided upon which physical and virtual space to visit and use. The relationships that formed and developed within *new space* were dependent on the provision of the physical space, resource and the value the individual placed upon it. Therefore snowball sampling people-to-people become redundant, and a new strategy was required to take its place.

A researcher must recognise a point within the research when they can, with confidence, move with the flexibility that a constructivist approach permits and accommodate the needs of the emerging research (Coyne, 1996). In respect of this particular research identifying an obstacle, i.e. that the sample was proving difficult in fact impossible to reach. A re-examination of the research to date and consideration of a different approach was required. Snowball sampling issue-to-issue was employed; the issue targeted individuals and groups who had a pre-existing interest in visual art. Six strategies were introduced to recruit respondents:

- A mail shot to art history and fine art interest groups within the geographical boundary of the case study.
- Flyers inviting people to participate and a posting box for replies in the local gallery (Shipleigh Art Gallery) within the case study boundary.
- Mini notice boards inviting people to participate placed in every public library's internet access area within the geographical boundary.
- An opinion poll survey taken within the community space to establish use and purpose of the ICT facilities.
- An advert placed in the local newspaper-requesting people to participate in the research.

- Cuttings from a local newspaper of quotations by residents in the case study area, discussing the meaning and influence of arts and culture within their community.

However, changing the sampling issue-to-issue produced a slow and uneven accrual of data. The sample in effect became a hidden community (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997).

Hidden communities are ordinarily associated with sensitive topics. Despite snowball sampling being used in many occasions to access hard to reach populations it does not necessarily lead to a mass of respondents (Lee, 1993). However, within known populations and less sensitive subject areas, hidden communities exist (Lee, 1993). Lee (1993) notes that the less visible an activity is, the harder it is to sample.

This particular sample was set by a geographical boundary with criteria to establish those individuals who use computers in a physical community space to look at visual art. The emergent issue of the nature of the relationship between the user and the virtual space is an isolated process and thus the sample becomes hidden. A hard to reach population presented the researcher with a barrier. In effect there was no one identifiable in the physical space using PCs to look at visual art. This required the researcher to review her own understanding of *new space* and question that of the providers and their interpretation of the nature of *new space*. The use of and relationships within *new space* were evidently fluid and un-bounded therefore in order to meet the research objectives in respect of *new space*, the researcher needed to reconsider the sampling strategy. The notion of a hidden sample was pivotal in the progression of the research and in the researcher's decision-making process into Phase II in order to meet the needs of the study and ultimately the consideration of a second case study site.

4.11: Phase II Case Study Two

4.11.1: Rationale for a Second Case Study Site

A constructivist approach is one of flexibility responding to the emerging insights. Sampling must evolve with the methodology and when a barrier or obstacle is encountered then the researcher must discover what is needed to overcome this obstacle in the most useful given situation by employing the most suitable method (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). It was the specific nature of *new space* and the hidden sample that determined the researcher should explore an alternative case site and method of sampling.

In Phase I the community was defined as “*living in a particular local area*” (Dictionary.com, 2004) i.e. the common factor of living in Gateshead. Within that site there were identified physical community spaces that provided access to a virtual space, the web and DVA resources. The individual was in a physical community space seeking access to a virtual space, these spaces equating to the concept of *new space*.

In considering the isolated activity of the user's interaction with the resources and virtual space observed in phase I it became increasingly apparent to the researcher that the web presented a suitable and appropriate second case study site as a community space.

“A virtual community is first of all a social entity. It is a number of people who relate to one another by the use of a specific technology – just as in a traditional community we often see communities as something evoked by geographic closeness” (Stolterman et al, 1999).

Therefore in the second case study site the Web community was defined by the common use of visual art web pages by individuals. Potential respondents were asked if they used *new space* as defined within the research. From this the researcher identified that individuals were still in a physical space accessing a virtual space but this physical space was primarily the home and/or work. Thus the concept of *new space* had not altered only expanded to include additional physical spaces. It was as much the nature of *new space*

as the research design in this second phase that influenced the process of data collection. The researcher, no longer present in the same physical space as potential respondents but operating as the respondents did in a personally chosen physical space (home or work) to access the virtual space, necessitated consideration of the development of a holistic tool for data collection and analysis. This permitted interaction with the respondents in the environment of the web.

In the identification of this second site it was the researcher's intention to achieve the research aims and objectives by gaining access to a second sample through the intensive study of a second single setting, the Web. In particular the files, i.e. pages, containing information and links to resources throughout the Internet, were bounded only by the individual respondent's activity within the space and the researcher's direction and selection of particular pages. The multiple uses of the Web make difficult the definition of a bounded area for study, as it will be the subjectivity of the user who defines the boundaries.

Multiple case study design was maintained to permit cross-case analysis providing insight into those multiple realities of the individuals within that virtual community space (Yin, 1984).

As a community the Web is a space occupied by individuals independently. Castells (1996) refers to this as a "*disembodiment from the individual's geographic meaning*" (Castells, 1996, p.23) providing, as Negroponte (1995) speculated, a window looking out – into a community that could "*stretch five thousand miles and six time zones*" (Negroponte, 1995, p.6). Therefore the virtual community in this context was defined as a place of "self-definition".

"By changing [physical] space, by leaving the space of one's visual sensibilities, one enters into communication with a space that is physically innovating...we do not change place, we change our nature" (Bachelard, No Date).

4.11.2: Criteria for Choosing the Case Study

Selection of the case study was dependent upon two key elements, **Presence** and **Purpose**.

Presence: The Individual enters the virtual community space.

Purpose: In that space the individual seeks out and views visual art.

4.11.2.1: The Case Study Environment - The World Wide Web

The Internet provides a number of services,

- Electronic mail (e-mail). Permitting the sending and receiving of mail.
- Access to discussion groups.
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) allows a computer to retrieve files from a remote computer in order to view or save the files.
- The World Wide Web (WWW or "the Web"). The largest and fastest growing activity on the Internet. (Internet Guide, 2004).

The Web incorporates all of these Internet services and more. The Web enables the user to retrieve documents, view images, animation and video, listen to sound files, speak and hear voice and view programs that are designed to run on practically any computing platform in the world, providing the computer in use has the appropriate hardware and software capability.

Visual art resources on the Web have and continue to increase at an exponential rate. Museum services, galleries, government, educational institutions, artists and individuals at a global level contribute to a vast and diverse resource. To view and encounter visual art within this space is to **attribute, assign and modify** use and meaning to the work.

"One critical dimension of the web is that it has permitted new levels in the manipulation of images and text" (Burnett and Marshall, 2003, p.70).

4.11.3: Sampling

Conventional methods of sample strategy had failed to yield respondents for the study. Changing to snowball sampling issue-to-issue proved to be a very

slow uneven process. Choosing the Web as a new case study site offered the possibility not only to recruit respondents to the study but also to extend the range of participants. Using a method of on-line recruitment provided the opportunity for respondents to participate at any time, at their convenience, within their own chosen physical space.

Employing purposive sampling limited the concerns of access, barriers and ICT skills. In this phase of the research the method of data collection changed from face to face to computer – mediated – communication (CMC).

4.11.3.1: Focus Group

The issue of a hidden sample was unexpected and required a re-evaluation of the research and so before going directly to the second case study the researcher introduced another [experimental] step. The researcher was eager to maintain a connection with the original case study site Gateshead, realising that a shift to a Web community would require a significant shift in the research design.

A focus group was introduced, to offer the researcher the opportunity to bridge the gap between the first case study (Gateshead) and the second (the web), making a managed and more structured move towards the second site and the ability to test emergent themes and new data collection techniques. The focus group comprised of individuals who were familiar with Gateshead's visual art profile. The aim of introducing this group was to gain understanding of the selected group's view, experience and multiple perspectives of viewing visual art using a PC (Gibbs, 1997).

Selection of the focus group participants was dependent upon three key elements, **Awareness, Understanding and Skills**

Awareness:	of Gateshead and the visual art programme
Understanding:	Concept of Lifelong Learning and Learning Society
Skills:	Possessed basic ICT skills, enable email and Web searching

To meet these criteria a cohort of post-16 year old students, familiar with the physical case study site, the technology and online resources, was enlisted to discuss the concept of viewing visual art via a PC.

Community, in the context of the focus group, was defined as a group of people “*organized into a unit, or manifesting some unifying trait or common association*” (Disaster Management, 2004) i.e. a member of the student cohort.

A group session was used to initiate discussion around DVA resources, the nature of lifelong learning and living, working and studying in Gateshead. An activity was presented to the group; a list of DVA websites was provided, from which the students were asked to select three Web sites, then spend time browsing their chosen sites. Each group member over a period of fourteen days selected their own *new space*, the physical (home, university, library or work) and the virtual (from the list provided) to view DVA and then completed two sets of open ended questions via the research website developed for data collection in phase II and discussed in detail in 4.11.4.

4.11.3.2: Access to the Community

The initial point of access to the web community was identified as electronic notice boards and to maintain the focus on Gateshead the initial discussion boards selected were aimed at specific geographical areas within the geographical boundary of GMBC. The notice boards included those set up for and targeted specifically at communities in Dunston, Gateshead, Houghton le Spring and Whickham.

Maintaining a focus on Gateshead, potential respondents living or working within the physical community were also encouraged to participate through interaction in the virtual community, mediated by e-mail. These potential respondents were invited to participate through,

- Flyers and a posting box in the Gateshead art gallery.
- Mini notice boards placed next to each open access pc in every public library throughout GMBC.

- The placement of an advert in the regional newspaper.

Responding to the research in terms of the sample i.e. low response rates and identification of those individuals using both *new space* and DVA, the web community space was further expanded to discussion boards associated with other areas of the North East of England. It was then considered appropriate to widen again the community sample area to include discussion on electronic notice boards aimed at specific interest groups such as visual art.

The researcher, herself an active member of the Web [community] space, explored the viability of the creation and development of a website to allow discussion and collection of data. This would enable the researcher to enter the 'world' of the respondent, supporting the ethos of a truly constructivist approach – achieving understanding through experience in the environment of the individual [*new space*] dependent on the interaction of the researcher and the context. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). However this also determined that a shift in focus from Gateshead as the website would permit a self-selecting sample with a global dimension.

4.11.4: Data Collection: Tools for Computer Mediated Communication

Selwyn and Robson (1998) observed that the growth in use and availability of communication technologies coincided with the rise in popularity of qualitative research methods (Selwyn and Robson, 1998). In particular with reference to this research, qualitative research takes a phenomenological approach e.g. hermeneutics or grounded theory, which rely on textual data. (Selwyn and Robson, 1998). Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) as a suitable research tool and the viability of collecting data by such a method has a number of advantages for both the researcher and participant. It offers the researcher the convenience of data in a transcript format and the participant the opportunity for a considered and rich response.

Asynchronous (two way communication with time delay) CMC tools were employed i.e. discussion boards, e-mail and Web questionnaires. It is the

nature of asynchronous communication that provides the primary advantage as a data collection method. Individuals can respond how and when they wish creating an unconstrained friendly comfortable environment (Selwyn and Robson, 1998).

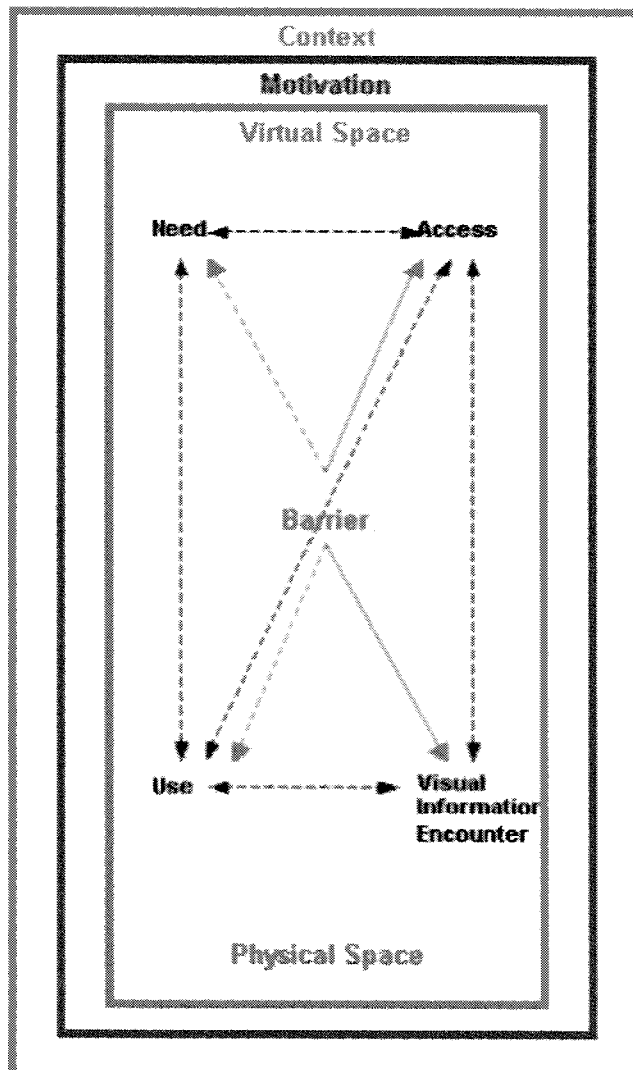


Figure XVI: Sense Making situation-gap-use Triangle
Adaptation of Kari (1998) and Dervin (1993)

As discussed earlier Dervin's Sense-Making theory (Dervin, 1983) and in particular the integrative model based on Dervin's situation-gap-use triangle employing the time-line interview and help-chain remained a suitable component of the data collection tool kit (4.9.2). However, based on the researcher's experience in Phase I it was considered that the triangle needed to be adapted. Dervin's model is based on the premise that individuals seek out information when they encounter a gap in their own knowledge or understanding.

Kari (1998) identified that a bridging of that gap was required to meet the individual's particular need, implying that the individual is actively seeking and aware of the gap. Kari suggests that in Dervin's (1993) triangle, situation-gap-help are considered equal components. However, Kari identifies situation as the context in which this process occurs and therefore

"the situation does not arise before sense-making, but sense-making occurs in a situation" (Kari, 1998, p 6).

Kari's research is concerned with the whole process of information seeking and the development of Dervin's sense-making triangle into a more complex substantive theory that includes concepts and within those concepts (particular to Kari's own inquiry sub-concepts). Kari's model displays at the higher level the concepts of *Seeking, Need, Use and Barrier* bounded by situation that is the context. DVA information seeking can be considered as an **encounter** where a need and use may develop. The individual may not be aware of the barriers that confront him/her or of the bridge to overcome such barriers. This requires the individual to be aware and make sense of the encounter, therefore the barriers and bridge need to be explicit (Kari, 1998). Building on Kari's (1998) own adaptation of Dervin's triangle which aimed to encapsulate a holistic information seeking process and not isolated aspects, the triangle and Kari's more complex model was developed for this research into a sub-set of squares where use and need are not the drivers for access but develop through and complementary to access (Figure XVI).

Initially maintaining the focus on Gateshead, **electronic discussion boards** set up for and targeted specifically at communities within the geographical boundary of Gateshead were selected and a recruitment message posted.

Art in the Community on the Web by, (name) 02/07/02 06,43 am
Msg, 2 of 3 Yahoo Message Board - Transcript
What do you think?
On the Web
I would like to discuss with people who use computers either at home or in public spaces to look at visual art.
Why use this technology and media to view? Does this replace traditional viewing of art. Are there some art forms that are particularly suited to this media?
In the Community
How do you feel about art in your community? Does it affect your life? Is it important to you? Does it make a difference?
Looking forward to a good discussion - Heather

Figure XVII: Posting on an Electronic Discussion Board

This was further extended to include the wider North East of England region and subject specific discussion boards i.e. visual art.

Email can be considered as one of the most used and useful applications of the Internet (O'Docharteigh, 2002). Email activity is limited to those individuals who have or can gain access to a PC and have the necessary capabilities to use email software and therefore in the context of this study, an appropriate sample group when applying purposive sampling.

Questionnaires or surveys by email require no additional facilities or expertise than those the individual employs in their everyday email activity (Mann and Stewart, 2003). Mann and Stewart identified that there is nothing to prevent respondents altering email questionnaires or responding to questions as they choose. This was acknowledged as a possible limitation however the issue of a 'considered' or less spontaneous response is prevalent in all forms of interviewing and by providing the opportunity of time to consider a response may result in a more 'truthful' reply.

Respondents living or working within the physical community were encouraged to participate by e-mail. These potential respondents were recruited as for the Web through

- Flyers and a posting box in the Gateshead art gallery.
- Mini notice boards placed next to each open access pc in every public library throughout GMBC.
- The placement of an advert in the regional newspaper.

To support the discussion board and email activity a **website**, (URL: <http://www.thevalueofart.co.uk>) was developed using Microsoft FrontPage. Potential respondents were directed to the site via the discussion boards, email and from search engines. The website provided an explanation of the research and invited users to complete two separate sets of questions hosted on the site, the first relating to art activities and interests and the second relating to the discovery of visual art on the web and the respondent's activities in that environment. A third questionnaire was developed for the

student focus group and was used to gather data about their expectations of the experience in the context of lifelong learning and art and culture as an 'everyday thing'. Visitors to the site were also invited to join the discussions posted on the discussion board hosted within the site.

The questionnaires were created using software (Zisp Dynamic Tool files) provided by the researcher's Internet Service Provider (ISP). A Guest Book template was modified to create the three separate questionnaires comprising of 12, 12, and 8 respectively open-ended questions.

Apart from the primary advantage of the web site being "in the virtual community" and that the data collection could potentially occur 24 hours a day, seven days a week, there were a number of additional advantages in using a web-based questionnaire.

Simple design and formatting allowed the researcher to create an appealing easy to navigate interface. Features of the questionnaire such as using boxes to enter text, lists and providing a submit button to send the information when finished, made answering the questions easier for the respondent. Dependent on the browser used to view the questionnaire, web surveys can ensure that the questionnaires will look identical to each respondent, (Mann and Stewart, 2003). For the researcher the data was received in a pre-defined format ready for analysis.

4.11.5: Field Work

Exploratory observation through a mapping exercise was carried out to gain understanding of the **context**, i.e. the web community, with particular reference to the type, nature and scale of the resources. Based on the research objectives, criteria were developed to search and 'hit' visual art web pages and sites.

The criteria defined four elements; **resource type**, **search terms**, **point of physical access**, and **enhanced content**.

Resource Type:	Access gained through – e.g. search engine, museum site, commercial site
Search Terms:	e.g. artist name, subject, medium, phrase
Point of Physical Access:	e.g. work, community space, home
Enhanced Content:	Dependant on location e.g. library intranet

The mapping exercise was carried out at regular intervals throughout the active research. Information regarding the four specific elements was recorded in a spreadsheet allowing a rich picture to be developed of the breadth and nature of the resources available on the web.

Exploratory, non-participant **observation** was employed to initiate an understanding of the web community space i.e. the natural environment and the individual within. Throughout the period of observation the focus was directed onto a number of areas to enable understanding of the individuals, their interaction, activity, feeling and movement within the virtual space. Observation of the virtual community space was achieved by visiting

- Electronic Discussion Boards.
- Visual Art Sites that maintained discussion lists.
- Virtual Communities.
- Individual artist's sites that actively engaged and encouraged discussion around their work.
- Government and public visual art sites.

Informed by the **interviews** in Phase I of the research and the focus group, a set of open-ended questions was developed and designed to be useable both in an email format or web questionnaire. In most instances respondents also sent a covering email with the return of the data.

Three modes of recording data were used. Firstly extensive field notes were recorded in an **observation journal** of the same kind used in Phase I, making explicit the distinction between the observed and the researcher's

interpretation. Field notes were again based on Robson's (1993) observation framework but adapted to the community web space, recording the

- Site or page URL.
- Layout of the web site or page.
- Purpose.
- Resources.
- Communication technologies.
- Relevant details of the individual's involved.
- Activities of those individuals.
- Specific individual actions.
- Particular occasions.
- The sequence of events.
- Emotions in particular context Interview transcripts.

Second, **email** interviews were compiled in the body of the email using the list of open-ended questions. Responses to the email questionnaire were returned in a text format ready for analysis and transfer to the data analysis software Atlas*TI.

Third data submitted **via the website questionnaires and discussion board** were collected in a page automatically generated by each 'Guest Book' template and stored in a folder on the associated ftp site. Entries from each respondent were identified by the date and time (data was submitted with the most recent entries being displayed in the file first). The data was received in a text format ready for analysis and transfer to the data analysis software.

4.11.6: Data Analysis

The electronic collection of data necessitated a reconsideration of how that data should be analysed. The freedom of the electronic space provided the opportunity to collect a richer set of data in the form of electronic images, discussion, documentation and links to websites.

As in Phase I each individual case was examined and the *features of significance/value* (Figure V) were used to identify initial themes. The data was received in a format ready for transfer to the analysis software and, once placed in that workspace each case and across cases was explored.

Within a hermeneutic framework the research design was emergent, a continual process of responding to and reflecting on emerging themes and issues. The creation of an **electronic hypertext document** (EHD) related more closely to this integrated responsive emergent approach and a natural progression for the researcher, providing an accurate review of her progress and the nature of the research. It was therefore not only a form of presentation and reading but also an integral part of the research process and was the final phase of data analysis.

Creating the hypertext document required the researcher to demonstrate and create literally the connections, links and relationships between all the research material including the literature, field experiences and raw data. The physical action of making those connections and defining the relationships continued the researcher's process of reflection and assessment to the last in order to gain and demonstrate an understanding of value as attributed by each individual in the context of *new space*.

The defining of hermeneutics as the underpinning philosophy and specific framework for data collection and analysis supported the holistic nature of the research. This holistic approach required the researcher to be continually moving, consciously in play with and acutely aware of each element of the research activity.

The complexity of the individual constructions of reality collected through this process engaged the researcher in Gergen's (1994) dance, a continuous interaction, movement and re-defining of the relationships with each partner i.e. the six primary elements of the research process;

1. The researcher

2. The individual
3. The data collection
4. The analysis
5. The emerging findings
6. The Design.

The EHD as a holistic tool permitted a richer qualitative interpretation that would not be possible in a hard copy paper format. The inclusion of all raw data, documents and links, offers the reader an insight to 'the dance' the movement and relationship between each element and provides a complete and visible audit trail instilling trustworthiness in the research, demonstrating a triangulation of evidence and the ability to follow the development of ideas to their outcomes.

It provides a graphic demonstration and construction of the non-sequential process of the research and a visible demonstration of the hermeneutic process and the researcher's own development, interpretation and progression.

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Chapter 5: Rationale for the Creation of an Electronic Hypertext Document: A Holistic Tool

“This isn’t about getting away from writing. It’s about extending writing and giving the reader a richer [interactive] experience” (Mangan, 1996)

The nature of this research and the chosen methodological approach determined that a version of the thesis be created as an electronic hypertext document (EHD).

5.1: Introduction

The research was focussed upon individuals who use *new space* to seek, discover and explore visual art in their everyday lives, the purpose being to seek an understanding of value as attributed by the individual; to know their reality not in abstraction but as a contextual whole. Value was identified as not being determined by the object i.e. visual art but by the experience, the holistic process of access to visual art in an electronic [virtual] space within a [physical] community space.

In taking a hermeneutic approach the researcher came to an understanding that this dynamic space should be experienced directly and in order to gain insight of how it, and other such spaces and resources, are used and are of value to individuals, this implied that the most suitable format for such a presentation should mirror this dynamic space, hence the creation of a second version of the thesis in an electronic hypertext format.

In Chapter 4 the concept of ‘the dance’ is used as a metaphor to describe the researcher’s activity and movement between each element of the research. Janesick (1998) determines qualitative research to be similar in many respects to dancing. As dancers must prepare through training, exercise and learning of the basic steps so too must a qualitative researcher engage in a series of exercises (the research process) and learning activities, evaluating not only their performance but also the exercises themselves (Janesick,

1998). In using this metaphor Janesick seeks to demystify qualitative research techniques and open up an understanding to a wider audience. The dance metaphor can also be used to explain and explore the many relationships evident in the research between the researcher, the respondents, the data and field experiences (Gouzouasis and Leigh, 2003). The dance metaphor is also used within this research to draw attention to the importance and relevance of the researcher's experimenting with a combination of perspectives to meet the needs not only of the research but also the researcher's approach i.e. a hermeneutic perspective. This enables the research process to be viewed not only through the eyes of the researcher but also the respondents and in doing so allow the relationships and respondents' voices to emerge (Greene and Freed, 2005).

5.2: *new space*

Growth of the *new space* is assisted by the commitment of British government to facilitate the Learning Society through the use of ICTs. *New space* has two distinct components one the *physical* which can be the home, library, work, gallery, community centre, and second the *virtual* the world wide web or network environment where visual art resources are held and made available as a shared resource. In themselves they are not *new space(s)*, the term *new space* being defined in 1997 by the Council of Europe referring to the possibilities afforded by digital media and virtual environments for visual art and the individual. But together the *physical* and the *virtual* space and the inter-relationships that exist and develop produce a **different** space that is **unique** to each individual.

It is the concept of this *new space* that has developed with the research and is central to the rationale for this presentation format and access to the thesis.

5.3: Nature of the Space

The character and dynamics of *new space* introduced a number of challenges, which the researcher had to address and respond to in order to accommodate the needs of the emerging research. In particular, the

realisation of a 'hidden sample', led the researcher to respond by entering the *new space* herself to engage with the sample. This was facilitated through the development of a Web site and discussion board, which permitted a self-selecting sample. Data was collected electronically necessitating a reconsideration of how that data should be analysed and presented. The freedom of the space provided the opportunity to collect a diverse set of data in the form of electronic discussion and documentation and links to websites.

The very nature of *new space* denies boundaries, and as such it was the individual that shaped the space, both physical and virtual, and the inter-relationships that developed there, producing a number of variables that constituted and determined the experience and relationships. These relationships between the individual, the space, and visual art, permeated throughout and were key to the research.

5.4: Individual

The individual was placed firmly at the centre of the research in order to gain an understanding of value as attributed by the individual. The researcher believed that this could only be achieved within a qualitative, constructivist paradigm, in which the individual constructs his or her own reality with knowledge and meaning being determined within specific context.

Taking a user centred approach allowed flexibility, as the researcher could not anticipate contextual factors or the realities she would encounter. Constructing a version of the thesis using hypertext enables the reader, the user within a heuristic practice, to experience and explore *new space* and thus an understanding of the medium, relationships and the individual's experience.

5.5: The Methodological Approach and Hypertext

The term heuristic refers to the process of learning by trial and error (Abbott, 2004; Poulter, 2003, 2005). Poulter (2005) determines a heurist to be someone who learns by a more conscious process of reflective interaction

with the particular physical and social surroundings under exploration and not simply by a 'blind' process of trial and error. Within the context of this research the researcher's heuristic response to the data permitted the development of a theoretical understanding of *new space* and within that context of *new space* an understanding of value for each individual and the use of DVA; a synthesis of both objective fact and subjective experience, at all times being aware of both the individual's and researcher's own subjective world view (Poulter, 2005).

The analysis of qualitative data within a constructivist inquiry takes full advantage of the richness and diversity of the materials, documents and experiences derived from the [field] encounter (Pfaffenberger, 1988). Pfaffenberger (1988) determines that such analysis is conscious of all relevant and potential material at the same time, regardless of whether they have derived from interviews, observation or a particular body of literature. By creating a hypertext version of the thesis the researcher can further extend this heuristic practice through a continued engagement with *new space* i.e. in the creation of the hypertext document and in doing so take advantage of that rich diversity of materials, experience and data providing a heightened awareness of *new space* and enabling the researcher to respond directly to the ideas and concepts emerging from the research.

Development of the content and methodology directed the researcher to hypertext, which had the potential to further strengthen the reading of the thesis by making dynamic the relationships and linkages that would exist in a print thesis, e.g. between the literature, methodology and analysis. Hypertext is about relationships and has the ability to demonstrate graphically the relationships that are evident in and have emerged from the research.

"I can bring the reader much closer to the actual experience I had..."
(Witt, 1996)

The emphasis being in a constructivist inquiry on understanding reality as the participant sees it (Bradley, 1993), the reader of the thesis becomes empowered to choose his or her own path. They can explore the relationships, reflections, decisions and the emergent research design, as they wish.

Creation of the hypertext document was not concerned with developing complex software or web design or being new or groundbreaking. It was simply to use standard web technology i.e. Hypertext Mark-Up Language (HTML) to support this understanding.

5.6: The Electronic Hypertext Document

This format permits an understanding of the nature of the *new space* in a way that a print version could not. The awareness of the relationship between the reader and the virtual space is heightened providing insight into the lived experience as understood by the researcher and participants. Virtual space is about opportunity and freedom to follow, to read, to print, to copy to save. Hypertext format provides a platform for an insight into the worlds of the individual respondents making explicit the potential for transferability.

Within a hermeneutic framework the research design was emergent, a continual process of responding to and reflecting on emerging themes and issues. The EHD relates more closely to an integrated responsive emergent approach. Creation of the document in this format was a natural progression for the researcher providing an accurate assessment of her progress and the nature of the research.

As established in Chapter 4 this format allows the researcher to include all raw data, documents and links, offering a complete and visible audit trail instilling trustworthiness in the research demonstrating a triangulation of evidence and the ability to follow the development of ideas to their outcomes, thus providing a graphic demonstration and construction of the non-sequential

process of the research and the researcher's development, interpretation and progression.

Kirschenbaum (1996) distinguishes between two uses of the term electronic thesis. On one hand the term refers to a thesis that is:

"submitted, archived and accessible solely ...in electronic format"
(Kirschenbaum, 1996).

This form of electronic thesis could be submitted within any academic discipline and easily replicated in hard copy. The second use Kirschenbaum defines is that of a hypertext or multimedia thesis. A thesis that is:

'self-conscious of its medium and uses the electronic environment to support scholarship that could not be undertaken in print'
(Kirschenbaum, 1996).

It is the use of the second definition that corresponds to the rationale for this document. By creating this format as Kirschenbaum identifies, questions regarding validity, integrity, trustworthiness in the research and the Higher Education environment in which the document is produced and exists becomes more pronounced. It places the researcher in a position of vulnerability as the audit trail becomes tangible.

The inclusion of the raw data, documents, and processes enriches the work and is included for the very reason Kirschenbaum defines in the second definition. The thesis is 'self-conscious' of its medium, the electronic environment in which the researcher and the research has been immersed. Qualitative research can exploit the functionality of such online media to meet the needs of research (Clarke, 2000).

5.7: Summary

As recognised in Chapter 4 the hypertext format of the EHD is not only a form of presentation and reading but also an integral part of the research process.

It was the final phase of data analysis. Creating the hypertext document required the researcher to demonstrate and create literally the connections, links and relationships between the raw data, the data in its conceptual and descriptive form, the analysis, synthesis and process (Halpern, 1983). The physical action of making those connections and defining the relationships furthered the notion of the 'Dance' and continued the researcher's process of reflection and assessment to the last in order to gain and demonstrate an understanding of value. In the creation of both a traditional hard copy thesis and an EHD version there are many challenges, both processes have their own particular strengths and implications. Chapter 9 reflects on these processes and the limitations and impact they have on meaning and understanding.

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Chapter 6: Hermeneutic Analysis

“put yourself in his place so that you may understand... what he learns and the way he understands it” Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855).

6.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the inductive data analysis. As established in previous chapters the purpose of the analysis was to explore within the wider concept of the Learning Society a new understanding of the value to the individual of access to and the use of DVA in *new space* and to explore in more broader terms the meaning of value.

6.2: Case Study Profiles

The research was structured into two distinct phases each with its own case study. A focus group was introduced in Phase I, to offer the researcher the opportunity to bridge the gap between the first and second case study making a managed and more structured move towards the second case study site. The multiple case study design identified holistic case studies (Chapter 4, 4.6) using multiple case studies of the individual respondents in each site. Figure XVIII presents a mapping of each case study site, the number of respondents that participated in the research, their location and method of participation for example face to face interview, interview via email or using the research website.

The case study one sample consisted of nine respondents, four of whom were interviewed in Gateshead Central Library and were users of the *new space* only and not DVA. These interviews were employed to contextualise the use of that particular *new space* establishing a sense of ownership of the space by the users and their approach to the activity. One respondent was interviewed at one of the seventeen branch libraries, which she visited on a regular basis. This she built into her daily activities (e.g. shopping) spending up to fifteen minutes viewing DVA in particular work by the painter Johannes Vermeer. Two respondents were residents of Gateshead who did not visit the

case study site but were frequent users of DVA, the Web and Internet. The respondent at the Shipley Art Gallery (an employee of the gallery) used DVA in connection with her work and research, it was evident that this blurred with her personal interests and activity in visual art.

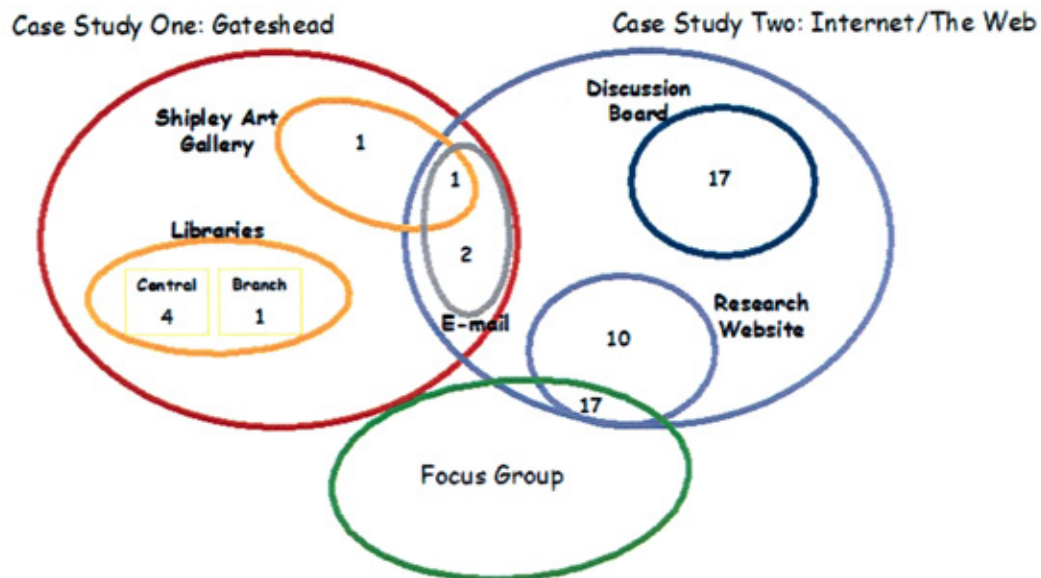


Figure XVIII: Case Study Mapping

The case study two sample consisted of twenty-seven respondents, all actively using DVA in *new space*. Seventeen respondents participated in discussion on the research website, FreePint, Yahoo and Cumbria discussion boards. Ten of the respondents used the research website to answer the two phased interview questions.

The focus group's relationship to the two Case Study sites is defined by the groups' participation within the research and their own understanding i.e. understanding in terms of Gateshead and its programme of visual and public art (in common with respondents in the Case Study One site), the Information Society and in their participation through the use of the research website (in the same way as the respondent's in the Case Study Two site).

The method in which respondents in both case study sites participated in the research reflects the context in which their own DVA activity occurred for example in case study one the respondent interviewed in the branch library always used the branch library to access DVA and the two respondents who were residents of Gateshead but participated in the research via email (recruited as participants from a letter placed in the local newspaper), did not visit the library or gallery sites and always accessed DVA from home.

A profile of each case study site, and a vignette of each individual respondent were produced. The purpose of creating these profiles was to provide specific understanding in the context of the case study and create rich descriptions of both the case study sites and individual respondents. This allowed the researcher to identify and analyse a number of variables that emerged from the data collection and analysis phases (Polit and Hungler, 1983). What follows is a rich description of the case study sites; Chapter 7 provides a detailed account of the individual case studies.

6.2.1: Defining Culture

Defining of the term culture was not set out in the research's original aims and objectives but emerged during the very first stages of data collection and analysis. The question ***"There is a lot of discussion about culture and being cultural, in real terms to your everyday life what does it mean to you?"*** was included in all interviews with the respondents. In addition to this question the newspaper cuttings discussed in Chapter 4 were used to further inform and support an understanding of the term Culture in the context of both case study sites. The original quotations were in response to a question posed by a representative of the newspaper in the streets of Newcastle and Gateshead asking the people living, working and visiting the region about their thoughts and understanding of the meaning of culture in the region. This feature was one activity in support of the 'Back the Buzz' campaign leading to the Capital of Culture Bid 2008.

The cuttings selected and used for the purposes of this research were restricted to only the residents of Gateshead, originally the intention was that the cuttings would support the context of the study and inform an understanding of the meaning of culture to those living in Gateshead but this was also extended to the Web case study site.

The cuttings were transcribed and entered into the data analysis software and coded applying the principles of the *Feature's of Significance/Value Matrix* (Figure V). Applying the matrix the question of culture was identified as contextual and an unexpected element (serendipity). Within the theme of culture five variables were established and within the fifth variable a further 31 variables were identified as detailed in Figure XIX below.

1. Attitude and Opinion (Culture-Gateshead)
2. Culture Negative View
3. Meaning of Culture
4. Resistance to Culture
5. Culture:
 1. Is Way of Life
 2. Is Antisocial Behaviour
 3. Is Buildings
 4. Is Choice Media
 5. Is Clubs Pubs
 6. Is Creativity
 7. Is Critical to Life
 8. Is Diversity
 9. Is Eating Out
 10. Is Education
 11. Is Everyday Things
 12. Is Football
 13. Is Good Public Services
 14. Is Growth of a Place
 15. Is Healthy Mind and Body
 16. Is History and Tradition
 17. Is Language
 18. Is Middle Class
 19. Is Museums and Galleries
 20. Is Music
 21. Is Needed to Survive
 22. Is Negative
 23. Is Parks
 24. Is People
 25. Is Performing Arts
 26. Is Regeneration
 27. Is Shopping
 28. Is Understanding
 29. Is Uplifting
 30. Is Visual Art
 31. Is Writing

Figure XIX: Characteristics of Culture

6.2.2: Case Study One: Gateshead MBC Tyne & Wear

The metropolitan borough of Gateshead covers 55 square miles and extends 12.6 miles along the South bank of the river Tyne and is the largest of the five Tyne and Wear districts (GMBC, 2004). It has a population of approximately 191, 177 with 87,000 households living in densely populated urban areas in the East and Centre and the more rural districts in the West (GMBC, 2004). Population levels are gradually declining, while the proportion of older people is growing (GMBC, 1998). The library service provides one Central Library situated out of the town centre on a former municipal site and seventeen branch libraries throughout the borough all offering PC open access areas.

In 1995 Northern Informatics (NI) a not for profit company was established through the partnership and support of major North East institutions including education, local authority, development agencies and the business community. NI's mission was to bring

"the information society to the North of England ahead of market processes to underpin social and economic development...avoiding the creation of a two tiered society of Information and Communication haves and have nots" (Northern Informatics, 1999).

Most of all NI was concerned with supporting organisations to embrace the opportunities and development of facilities for the region in the emerging information age (Northern Informatics, 1999). In so doing NI identified the potential of the public and academic library in the drive towards an inclusive Information Society. One of NI's early initiatives was the development of a regional information service (RIS) led by the Libraries and Information Sector Group (LISG). GMBC and its Libraries and Arts service were the coordinating partner for the project playing a significant role in the development (Gateshead, 2000).

In May 1999 the North Of England RIS was officially re-launched as thenortheast.com, a fully operational resource available to residents of the

North of England, anyone via the World Wide Web (WWW), with enhanced content for those individuals accessing the service in a North East library network space.

The RIS had three main objectives:

1. To enable a member of the regional community to access information on any desired subject.
2. To provide information on anything relating to the region to anyone in the world community.
3. To create partnerships between information providers across the region.

thenortheast.com portal can be used to explore:

- Opportunities in lifelong learning.
- Training and employment.
- The region's history and culture.
- Local studies on-line, including image archives.
- World Wide Web.

This service recognised both nationally and internationally, formed the cornerstone for the European Commission's LIBERATOR programme for libraries in Europe. The objectives of the LIBERATOR project were to

“establish and develop exemplary regional information services (RIS) in three diverse European regions...building on lessons from the North of England demonstrator already established” (Northern Informatics, 1999).

This project responded to the 1997 Public Libraries and the Information Society report recognising that the possible opportunities made available in an information society had the potential to widen the disparity between individuals who were information rich and information poor and that networked public libraries had a major role to play in bridging the gap (GMBC, 2000). At this point in 2000 the creation and development of the first regional electronic

libraries network had been achieved bringing together all 284 libraries across the North of England. The focus was then to be directed upon the development and provision of a:

- Richer content
- Services in conjunction with the Northern Grid for Learning
- Community outreach programme
- Tourism Network.

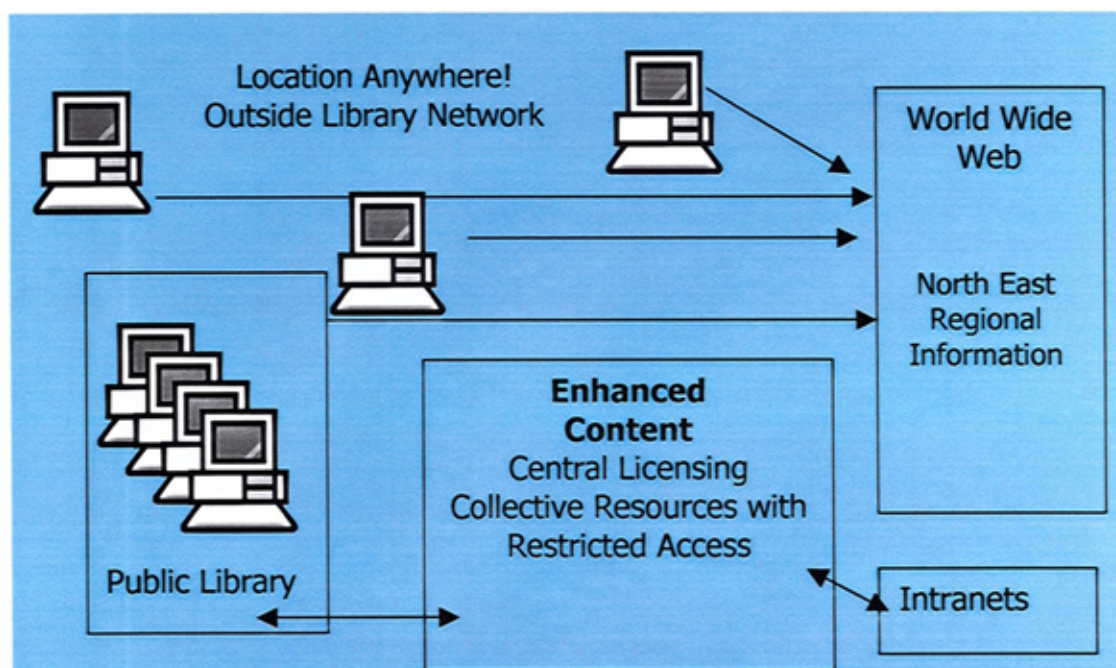


Figure XX: Gateshead Libraries and Arts service Network Structure

Gateshead: A SMART Region

The aim of a smart community is to use new media and technology to transform community life.

"The internet can be used as a driver for urban renewal making everything more accessible " (Holmes, 2001, pp30-31).

A SMART community integrates *e-commerce, e-government, healthcare, learning, culture, leisure and tourism* and is made accessible through a single portal. (Holmes: 2001).

A SMART community is totally inclusive and should be self-explanatory recognising no boundaries between rural and urban, privileged and deprived. It attempts to make available the benefits of the Information Society to everyone through

“access, connectivity, affordability, content and training, through the exploitation of Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) in all aspects of economic, social and cultural development” (Northern Informatics, 1999).

This rationale challenges many of the existing institutional structures including funding and support mechanisms.

A SMART community reflects the benefits and opportunities that the Information Society can bring to regional development, recognising the importance of knowledge-based businesses, (Northern Informatics, 1999) essential to the economy and general well being of the region.

A SMART community invests in developing its citizens through high-quality education and by encouraging a culture of lifelong learning, raising self-esteem and enhancing employability (Northern Informatics, 1999).

A SMART community invests in *“health, education, and social cohesion”* (Northern Informatics, 1999) recognising, promoting and marketing aspects of the region, which offer attractive conditions for example business and tourism.

GMBC embraced the concept of a SMART community, declaring in their ten-year plan that the ‘total’ well being of the community i.e. where people live, health, education and **the arts** go hand in hand and are fundamental to the well being of Gateshead as a whole (GMBC, 2000). The document *Towards 2010: A Vision for Gateshead* (GMBC, 2000) sets out what the Council wants to achieve through working in partnership with local people and groups so that, they ensure a better future for all local people:

"Local people realising their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead"
(GMBC, 2000).

6.2.2.1: Art and Gateshead

Since 1980 GMBC has been working to take art to the community in the form of public art, which has played a significant role in changing the physical environment of Gateshead. From the time of the 'Year of Visual Art', 1996 Gateshead has continued to receive recognition for its commitment and initiative towards the arts. The commissioning of the Angel of the North brought this recognition to the fore and the subsequent discourse that surrounded the work generated a culture of discussion by individuals in the community around art issues. The momentum of this discourse has and continues to increase at varying levels including policy, delivery and culture led regeneration. For example

- At policy level with the development of a Regional Cultural Strategy for the North East (Culture North East, 2001; DCMS, 2000).
- At delivery level with 'Common Knowledge' and 'Fine Fettle' two arts in health initiatives, which have developed health projects into cultural traditions and annual events.
- Through 'culture led regeneration in the development of Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, the Sage Music Centre, the construction of the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, the Gateshead Quays project and ultimately the joint bid to be Capital of Culture 2008 with Newcastle upon Tyne (Newcastle City Council, GMBC, 2002). These physical environmental changes provided a visual point of reference for discourse, awareness and the embedding of cultural and creative activity in everyday spaces.

Initial contact with a key informant within Gateshead Library and Arts Service (GLAS) took place in April 2000 providing a primary source of information and furthering understanding of the context. Through discussion with the informant

the notion, potential and actualisation of the crossover of visual art into learning in Gateshead was acknowledged. The research was identified as being timely with a number of new projects in Gateshead, in particular the neighbouring Shipley Art Gallery's project working towards their inclusion into the Northern Grid for Learning and as a member of the People's Network.

Discussion with the key informant led to a further two informants providing insight into the arts in Gateshead and the development, design and implementation of the electronic network of resources. These meetings established an understanding of and what is understood to be the community [from the provider, (GLAS) perspective, the Gateshead central library being the nucleus] defined by issue i.e. use and not geographical boundary. Both informants identified that new developments within GLAS provided the opportunity to explore *new spaces* for the arts. For example in the first phase of the Gateshead Quays development the project would explore the potential of new media as a *new space* for visual art (Informant I, 2000); in the development of thenortheast.com portal an image archive based on 'day trips' to Gateshead in the late 19th Century was currently being developed and incorporated into the portal (Informant II, 2000).

Observation

Exploratory observation was carried out to gain understanding of the context, [the Gateshead community] in which the focus of the research was to operate. This exploration of the natural physical environment, capturing the phenomenon in its own terms, observing individuals interacting in the physical space was used to build on the researcher's tacit knowledge, herself a resident of that community (Lincoln and Guba, 1981; Erlandson et al, 1983).

Long-term contact was established with another key informant [a member of the Gateshead Central Library team] who was in direct contact with members of the community, the electronic network and policy implementation. This informant facilitated the access to the site for observation whilst providing contextual information and documentation (Figure XXI).

Information Provided:	Analysis
Network Area Layout	Reference Library Plan (Figure XXXII)
Access Policy and Procedures	Users of the computer service and the Internet are required to be library members, agreeing to the library terms and conditions. A library number and PIN code is required to log onto the PCs. A PC can be booked for one hour a maximum of ninety minutes per day. Access to the PCs provides full Internet access, including sound, video, E-mail and Microsoft Office Software.
Discussion of methods relative to Best Value	<p>The Government has placed a duty of Best Value on all local authorities in the delivery of services by the most effective, economic, and efficient means available. Authorities are required to publish a performance plan and review every five years. Performance Indicators (PI), are used as the measure of a best value authorities performance in exercising a function. Targets are set against the PIs e.g. in Gateshead's library, Arts and Information Plan 1998-2001 <i>Computer terminals for public use per 100,000 population</i> Actual Performance 1998/99 = 12.57 Target 1999/00 = 22.62; <i>Number of RIS links created per week</i> Actual Performance 1998/99 = 10 Target 1999/00 = 15</p> <p>Best value is very much a statistical evaluation, key informants at the library perceived a difficulty in measuring the service or performance qualitatively.</p>
Documentation Provided:	Analysis
Library Plan – Library Arts and Information 1998 – 2001	<p>Inherent in the plan is the Council's strategic vision as defined in <i>Beyond 2000</i> and <i>Towards 2010</i>. Five areas of activity include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Library service 2. Access, Development and Information services 3. Tourism 4. Arts and Heritage 5. Central Support <p>Cross development links demonstrated in GMBC's success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel of North and associated school projects • Development Baltic Mill and Regional Music Centre <p>Regional ICT Issues and Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Gateshead-based content and applications developed in borough are accessible world-wide
Best Value Report – 2001	<p>Profiling GMBC and Library Service e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough lies in upper quartile of local authorities in national Department of Environment Transport and Regions (DETR) index of deprivation; basic adult skills show 18.7% of adults have low literacy and 40% low numeracy. • 33.5% Gateshead's population are active library members • Core of the library service is the Central library <p>ICTs integrated into the service, many projects designed to widen access. Library users are reaping the benefits of GLAS's many years at the leading edge of IT-based library services.</p>
Common Knowledge – Tyne and Wear Health Action Zone, 2000.	<p>Report summarising the first phase the Common Knowledge initiative to develop a Tyne & Wear network of participants and a community to take art in health projects into the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using arts and creative mediums to consider health issues and healthier living • The creative activity/process was used as a vehicle for discussion of the health issues

Figure XXI: Information, Documentation Supplied by Key Informants

The information and documentation detailed in Figure XXI provided a rich understanding of the operating environment of the Case Study One site. Particularly in terms of Best Value, the strategic vision and plans of the Arts and Library services and daily policy and procedure.

6.2.2.2: Case Study One Respondents

A vignette of each participant was created (Chapter 7) the purpose of the vignettes is to provide a sense of the individual in the context of their interest and visual art activities. Each vignette includes when they began using the web to view DVA, what DVA they particularly like and an insight to thoughts and feelings on art and life. Figure XXII below is an extract from one profile of a respondent from the case study one site.

Case Study One **Respondent 3**

I live in Gateshead, when I think of Gateshead -grotty town centre, wonderful parks and gardens.

I like modern art pop art, photographic art, sculpture. Basically anything that is not an "old master"

I probably became interested post school days

Arts is an everyday thing only in as much as I consciously look out for certain pieces...

Figure XXII: Extract Respondent Profile Case Study One Site

Respondent's from the case study one site were on the whole responsive to the arts and cultural activity in their community and displayed in general an association with the major arts projects when considering perceptions of Gateshead; i.e. *"the Millennium bridge and the Angel of the North, the Metro Centre, and the folly of 60's planners who destroyed the area near the Town Hall"*.

6.2.3: The Focus Group:

The focus group members comprised of local, national and international mature students studying in the North East of England. The criteria for inclusion in the focus group required of participants an awareness of

Gateshead and the visual art programme; an understanding of the concept of Lifelong Learning and Learning Society and to possess basic ICT skills to enable email communication and Web searching.

Prior to the focus group's period of DVA viewing, the group were asked to make a note of their expectations of the experience (searching for, accessing and viewing DVA). Following the period of activity a third questionnaire was developed for the focus group and was used to gather data about their expectations of the experience in the context of lifelong learning and art and culture as an 'everyday thing'.

In the recording of their expectations of the activity many of the focus group members commented that they were unsure what to expect from the experience despite being aware of some of the resources available, but hoped that they would be surprised. The points below provide an example of those expectations.

"Not sure what to expect"

"The aesthetic with no time restrictions unlike gallery opening times"

"I thought might find some interesting things about society"

"To see something new and interesting"

"A variety of different art mediums"

(Extract from Focus Group Respondent profiles 1-5)

Fourteen members of the group found that their expectations had been exceeded, not only in the range and diversity of the resources but also in the process and 'holistic experience', in that it was perceived as a relaxing and un-threatening experience, offering new insights and thinking for the respondent around visual art.

"Potentially exciting, able to access many pieces of work"

"Helped me re-evaluate my own definition of the word and will help me to appreciate more things as art"

"Broadened my awareness"

"Brilliant way of bringing art closer to people immediately found information that I might not have found in a [physical] gallery"

"I realised I don't appreciate art in a conventional sense"

(Extract from Focus Group Respondents 9, 11, 14-17)

As the focus group was presented with a purposeful task rather than 'natural' regular activity, vignettes [Chapter 7] were constructed on the basis of their experience of that activity and their thoughts regarding the activity and Life Long Learning. Figure XXIII below is an extract from one such vignette of a respondent from the focus group.

Focus Group
Respondent 5

Expectations-not sure that I'd see a variety of different art mediums but didn't expect them to be so different.

Learning Society- anyone with access to the Internet can learn from online galleries, since the Internet is free in so many libraries I think this really does correspond to LLL.

VA Everyday life - art can be beautiful challenging and uplifting it can catch your imagination and I think everybody could do with that.

Culture - should certainly be part of the ideal information society I think we have a little way to go before we worry about that.

Figure XXIII: Extract Respondent Profile Focus Group

6.2.4: Case Study Two: The World Wide Web

The terms Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW or the Web) are sometimes used interchangeably but are in fact two separate but related things. The Internet is a network of computer networks, which connect millions of computer networks together resulting in a network in which any computer can potential communicate with any other computer 24 hours a day as long as they are both connected to the Internet (Sofweb, 2002, Webopedia, 2005, NWIC, 2005). This immense network includes nearly every university,

government, and research facility in the world. It also includes many commercial and private networks.

Computers can be in homes, schools, universities, government departments, organisations and businesses of all sizes. They can be any type of computer a single personal computer (PC) or workstation on a company, university, school or library network (Sofweb, 2002, Webopedia, 2005, NWIC, 2005).

Using a common set of communication protocols, the Internet facilitates the transfer of files communication via email, chat rooms and discussion boards. The Internet supports the services of the Web, a component of the Internet that gives users the potential to present, design and access to information using a graphical interface.

The Web provides a means of access to information over the medium of the Internet; it is an information-sharing model built on top of the Internet. In order to allow computer software applications to communicate, exchange and share information the Web uses the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP), which defines how messages and instructions are formatted and transferred over the Internet. Web pages are formatted in a language called HTML (HyperText Markup Language), which creates and supports links to other web pages and documents allowing the user to jump from one to another simply by clicking on a 'link' or a hot spot.

Until 1992 the Web had been primarily text based. With the development of the 'web browser', a graphical user interface, access to the web became more accessible to the user. The browser is a software package with a graphical interface that requires the user to point and click to buttons, icons, and menus on screen; this was a particularly important development as it allowed web site designers to include not only text but also sound and images.

Through a browser the web enables the user to retrieve documents, view images, animation and video, listen to sound files, speak and hear voice and view programs that are designed to run on practically any computing platform.

6.2.4.1: Visual Art Resources on the Web

As defined in Chapter 3, visual communication is a vast visible world for providers and users, with images entering every aspect of life and as Pacey (1983) observed is increasingly technology dependent, creating a one way process of *"image production by the few...received by the many"* (Pacey, 1983, in Bell 1993, p. 62). The general population is identified by Helene Roberts (1988) as becoming,

"increasingly literate...[changing] traditional art history focused on aesthetics and style, [to] the use of art as a means to investigate and illuminate other cultural aspects" (Roberts, 1988 in Bell, 1993, p. 24).

Every day a disparate, diverse and complex assemblage of images is encountered, from traffic signs to paintings from news images to digital representations, all of which are subject to an acquired meaning and value according to the particular context and use (Sturken, and Cartwright, 2001). This encounter is increased at a global level in the use of the Web.

The vast majority of web sites use images and imagery in some form to support communication with their users. Artists showcase and curate their work online, public and private gallery collections can be browsed. Personal websites offer insight into an individual's particular 'art interest'. Many commercial gallery sites permit users to collect and hang in a virtual space before buying. Representations of visual art on the web are immeasurable and the defining of an image or visual art becomes more complex as users can enjoy or choose to view a cartoon or sculpture in the same screen.

A search for the term 'Gallery' in the search engine Google returns 541,000,000 results. The first ten results include three National Galleries (two UK and one USA), four private and commercial UK galleries; together these seven sites offer 58,283 images for viewing. In addition the National Gallery, London is also returned in this search and offers a further 2,300 paintings. Equally a search for a particular artist or genre will also return many images (results) for example a search for the British artist Gillian Ayres returns 98,600

results, the first twenty results are accurate and relate directly to the artist's work. Similarly a search for Surrealism returns 408,000 results, the first forty results are accurate and relate directly to the work of the surrealist movement. This provides insight into the vast and boundless resources offered with the Web 'community'.

6.2.4.2: Case Study Two Respondents

A vignette of each participant was created the purpose of the vignettes is to provide a sense of the individual in the context of their interest and visual art activities. Each vignette includes when they began using the web to view DVA, what DVA they particularly like and an insight to thoughts and feelings on art and life. Figure XXIV below is an extract from one vignette of a respondent from the case study two site.

Case Study Two **Respondent 9**

I just enjoy looking at art and learning about it as representative of human preoccupations. Not really interested in technique.

I like all sorts except the Damien Hirst School of Let's Take The Piss I don't really enjoy abstract art either, except some Paul Klee. Always was (interested in art) first image I remember being really struck by was a Lowry when I was about 7

Figure XXIV: Extract Respondent Profile Case Study Two Site

6.3: Identifying Themes: Features of Significance/Value Matrix

Love's (1994) *features of significance* were set against the *value elements* (*information seeking process; context, access and use*) as identified in Chapter 3 and applied to each individual transcript and identified data source e.g. newspaper cuttings. This application of the matrix was used to identify themes within and across the data. Each theme was recorded in the matrix at the point of intersection of the *feature* (row) and *element* (column). For example the theme of an **encounter** with **visual art** at a particular **age** (under the age of ten) was a description of a past experience that accounted or

contributed to present behaviour within the particular context of *new space* and therefore recorded in the cell **Historical / Context**. This theme was coded as **under 10** and **Youth**.

Past Experience (Historical)	"When I was about 3 or 4, my mum took me often to Glasgow Art Gallery I remember the Egyptian Stone Sarcophagus"
Behaviour in new space (Context)	"I like pottery, jewellery, and ceramic sculpture...I search for pottery, buying ceramics information on artists, possibility to purchase, and to have a look at information on exhibitions to attend".

(Extract from the Transcript Respondent 2 Case Study One)

Features \ Element	Information Seeking Process	Context
Affect	Art Information; LLL; Information (Content)	Active in the Arts; Age; Interest; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Ethos LLL; Identity; Negative View; Pride(Gateshead); Positive View;
Explicit/Implicit	Discovery (DVA); Effect; Ethos LLL; Finding Aids; Recording; Resources; Saving; Decision Making; Search Strategy; Web Links (DVA);	Personal Development (Culture); Experience (Physical); Experience (Virtual); Experience (Leisure Activity); Participation;
Historical	Recording; Use ICT to View (DVA);	Adult Life; Age; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (People-Gateshead); Initial Interest (Art); Residence; Purpose; Under 10; Youth;

Figure XXV: Detail from Features of Significance/Value Matrix

A complete listing of the research themes recorded in the *Features of Significance/Value Matrix* can be found in Appendix IV. This matrix is a visual representation of the analysis framework and emergent themes. **Context** was pivotal to the understanding of the individual's use of DVA and value construction, as it would enrich and focus the data. Setting context against the *features of significance* to determine what was important demonstrates here

the focus of the analysis activity. From the matrix (Appendix IV) it is clear to see that the majority of the analysis activity and the emerging of themes has occurred in this section.

The emotive language identified using the feature **affect** in relation to **context** reveals attitudes and initial interest towards the visual arts, the individuals participation, issues of identity and particular to the Gateshead sample both the articulation of positive and negative views towards the community.

In the earlier discussion of the method of analysis it was suggested that when applying the feature **affect** to the data, text representing emotive or language of an uplifting nature would be selected. That was not to imply that language or discussion of a negative nature would be disregarded. In fact in the exploration of value both positive and negative experiences are required in the personal development of the individual.

The act of participation as a learning process, and engagement with the *new space* was revealed through the **explicit / implicit** feature making the connection between action and thought, supported through the recognition and relationship to age and previous experience (the historical feature of significance).

Serendipity was employed to identify the unexpected, elements that the researcher could not anticipate. Here it presents two particular themes, firstly the meaning of culture to the individual and second the notion of an initial encounter with visual art. Related to this theme is the notion of 'culture in everyday life'.

Responding to the needs of the research, i.e. in a purposive sample seeking those individuals who use PCs to view DVA and the self-selecting sample responding to the research website negated the issue of barriers in terms of access and the information seeking process which is made explicit in the matrix, in that no findings or themes have been entered under *Serendipity / Information Seeking and Serendipity / Access*.

6.4: Presentation of the Data Analysis

The presentation of the data analysis is framed around the research questions. Three aims were established to guide the focus of the research and in doing so the emphasis was placed on **the individual** and **the potential** of DVA resources. Therefore this emphasis of the individual and DVA is reflected in the presentation of the analysis.

6.4.1: DVA and Lifelong Learning

6.4.1.1: Learning as a life process

The work of the Centre for Creative Communities (CCC) established in 1978 focuses on creative personal and community development. Through its many projects since being established, CCC has identified how important and central the arts and creativity are to human development and essential in the empowering and building of sustainable communities. This CCC recognises this development as being anchored in learning (CCC, 2005).

Regeneration and inclusion have long been and remain central to the Government's agenda. The vision of a culture of lifelong learning, knowledge economy and sustainable communities can only be realised by focussing on and empowering the members of those communities (DfES, 2001). The report *Skills for Social Inclusion and Knowledge Economy: Towards a Shared Vision (2001)* sets out the rationale for community-based learning. The report considered the work of the Policy Action Team (PAT) in particular the document *Skills for Neighbourhood Renewal Local Solutions (1999)* in which

it was identified that where success had been achieved in engaging those disadvantaged community members the activity or approach was

“small-scale, demand-led and firmly embedded in the every-day life of local communities” (DfES, 2001).

new space has the potential to engage learning at all levels as a life process by presenting the opportunity of access to electronic resources in a community space (e.g. home, library or work) and therefore into the

individual's 'everyday life'. The Individual's experience through their engagement with *new space* and DVA can result in learning elements. Characteristics of these elements can include, *challenge, opportunity, enjoyment/pleasure, action/doing, creative, direct experience, goal orientated* (Lieb, 1991, Ewell, 1997, Beattie, 2002). Data analysis identified in the context of this research learning elements to be those in Figure XXVI.

Across both case studies and the focus group elements of learning could be expressed in terms of *Experience, Opportunity, Participation and Resources*. Within these terms common characteristics emerged for example in all three cases *Experience* was identified with pleasure and creativity through the use of such adjectives as:

- Happiness
- Pleasure
- Cheer
- Pride

and in terms of creativity

- To be expressive
- [Human] Creativity
- Thinking
- Emotion

In looking at the characteristics in the Case Study Two column across all four elements, the language and characteristics identified are of a more positive, empowering and ambitious nature e.g.

- Human creativity
- To be expressive
- Success
- Time becomes less important.

Case Study One	Focus Group	Case Study Two
Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Activity – Learning through experience ("whatever I learnt [ICT skills] at school and picked up the rest as I went along" P 1) Confidence ("You can't really damage it perhaps go back to the start if you get stuck. I wouldn't say I'm an expert but I can get my way around if I needed to" P4) Understanding Creative thinking Pleasure Pride 	Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expression of emotion Understanding of human experience Pleasure/Happiness Life-knowledge Creativity New contexts 	Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human creativity Pleasure Cheer Pride To be expressive Reflection
Opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing new interest Access Presents opportunity 	Opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Access (24 Hour/Free) Increase personal potential Presents opportunity 	Opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep up to date Current awareness art and culture technology Success Broaden horizons Planning Time becomes less important
Participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer /family support Regular activity Stimulation Increase thinking Social Ritual 	Participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In DVA ("I feel very strongly that appreciating (and participating in) art is valuable and should be encouraged through education" (P67) Embodies ethos of Lifelong learning and earning Society Included in the Learning Society Inclusive Learn at home Sense of community 	Participation: <p>Methods of communication Follow up curiosity Collaboration Research</p>
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse Global Local content 	Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using familiar and un-familiar sources Places galleries unable to visit Increase availability of visual art Encounter previously unknown = increase personal knowledge 	Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symbolic Legacy – artists Potential of hyperlinks

Figure XXVI: Learning Elements

6.4.1.2: Visual Art, Learning and Social Function

The following questions were asked in order to discover how an interest in art or cultural activity had developed:

- *Can you recall when you first became interested in art?*
- *What was it that sparked this interest?*

The responses to these questions, primarily from the second case study site, indicated that the initial interest with art occurred at an early age and was sparked by an encounter or experience. Figure XXVII sets out the details of those first encounters including where indicated the nature of the visual art and the age of the respondent at that time. Appendix V provides the data network view and the coding and quotation data generated from the data analysis software to demonstrate those links and relationships within and to this theme.

Encounter	Visual Art	Age
Glasgow Art Gallery		3-4 years
Parental influence (Artist) at home	Parent's art work, prints and artist's biographies	A very young child
Sunday Supplements in 1970's		Young person
Scrap books and clippings	Jackson Pollock, Patrick Caufield, David Hockney	Young person
Parental influence (Home)	Keene	9
School days		Young person
School days		School days
Book Illustration and Church architecture		4 years (book illustration) 9-10 years (church architecture)
High School	Art History	Young person
Kindergarten	Drawing	Under 5 years
Living in Salford	Lowry Holbein	7 years 10 years
Associated with owner of a private collection	20 th Century Art	16 years

Figure XXVII: Initial Encounter with Art

Respondents were also asked to consider if art is an everyday thing.

- *Is art an everyday thing to you?*

In response to this question a number of variables were identified establishing that the users of DVA within the context of this research considered visual art to be an important and in some cases an inherent aspect of their everyday activity and adding a 'quality' to that every day experience. The variables identified were:

- Aesthetic Experience
- Relationship (between the viewer and the work)
- Understanding/Sense-making
- Pleasure
- Utility
- Value-added quality

Figure XXVIII sets out an example of the responses to this question and the rationale for each response. Only one negative response was recorded in that particular case the respondent believed that art could only be an everyday thing if they were actively creative and was not possible as a viewer of art.

A number of responses from the focus group to this question were not in the affirmative (yes or no) but reasoned why it should or should not be considered. This reasoning was based on the potential of art in offering the opportunity of learning and new experience. Appendix VI displays a network view from the data analysis software of the theme (Art as an Everyday Thing) showing the relationships within the data and a listing of the coding applied to this theme and linked to particular transcript extracts.

"Anyone with access to the Internet can learn from online art galleries. Since the Internet is free in so many libraries I think this really does correspond to life long learning" (Focus Group, Respondent 5).

Is Art an everyday thing?	Why?
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns exist in everything including mathematical equations and physical laws • Stimulation of the eye and cognitive thought, imagination and inspiration. • Learning and an occupation • Walls with prints, photographs – screen savers – matching clothes “even the way I put together my clothes a form of art” • Consciously look at the physical urban landscape of Gateshead • In everything • “I feel compelled to paint, as essential as breathing” • Paintings on walls, art books, photographs – a sense of rightness • Human creativity - Pleasure in images • “We probably don't see it or realise it is” • “Because it is not just art but history culture...” • Need beautiful, challenging, uplifting art • Art used in many different forms of communication • Appreciation and participation • No longer elitist • Everything can form part of art depending on your own point of view • Messages, meanings, thought provoking, awareness • Puts things into new contexts • Some but not all should be
No	Not creative prefer to be a viewer
Definitely	Food for the eyes - Walls with images
Already is	Some one somewhere is working on a new piece of art

Figure XXVIII: Is Art an Everyday Thing?

6.4.1.3: What do those individuals using *new space* to access DVA look at?

To discover what individual's were actually searching for and then viewing the following three questions were posed;

1. *Can you describe what you looked for and how you went about finding the 'art' material?*
2. *Generally, what is the main reason for you to look for an art subject on the Internet?*
3. *What form or type of art do you look at?*

The responses from these questions identified that DVA was searched for primarily using a search engine and identified as being in the form of a particular **object** that is the medium e.g. painting, sculpture, glass... and **subject** i.e. a particular artist, genre, or period. Figure XXIX details all the subject and object data from each respondent's response. In many instances respondents identified the same or similar artists, topics and objects.

Subject	Artists		Topic		
	Ernest Shepherd	Arthur Rackham	Animation	Abstraction	Cats
	Henri Matisse	Charles Vigor	Architecture	3 D	Gene Art
	Keene	Gustav Klimt	Impressionism	Contemporary Art	History
	Pablo Picasso	J M W Turner	Manuscripts Medieval Spain	Danish Art	Landscape
	Pierre Mondrain	Johannes Vermeer	Music	Light	Life
	Richard Avedon	Margaret Tarrant	Mythology	Miniatures	Living Artists
	Susan Coolidge	Paul Klee	Post WWII	Pop Art	Moonlight
	Vincent Van Gogh	William Scott	Religion	Screen Savers	Snow
			St Ives Artist	World Events	Water
Object	Ceramics	Jewellery	Photography		
	Glass	Manuscripts	Sculpture		
	Illustration	Painting	Wood carving		
	Installation				

Figure XXIX:

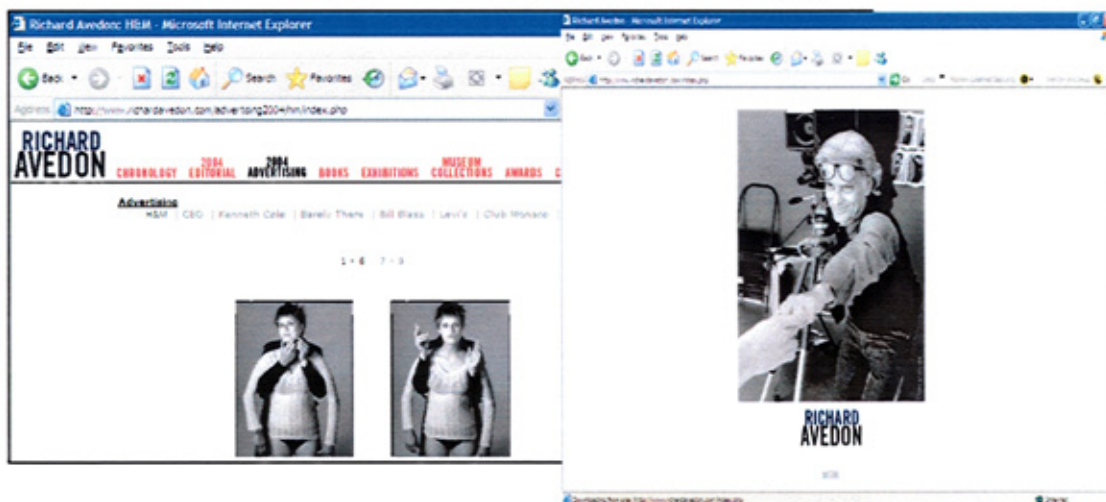
What do those individuals using *new space* to access DVA look at?

Within the theme *subject* the choice of DVA as illustrated in the above table (Figure XXIX) can be further defined in three categories, *artist*, *topic* and within topic *movement*. The screen shots that follow provide an example from

each of the three categories and the theme *object* indicating the breadth and diverse nature of the DVA resources within the sample selection of this research.

Figure XXX: Looking at DVA by Artist

Photographer: Richard Avedon, Advertising H&M (2004)
<http://www.richardavedon.com/index.php>

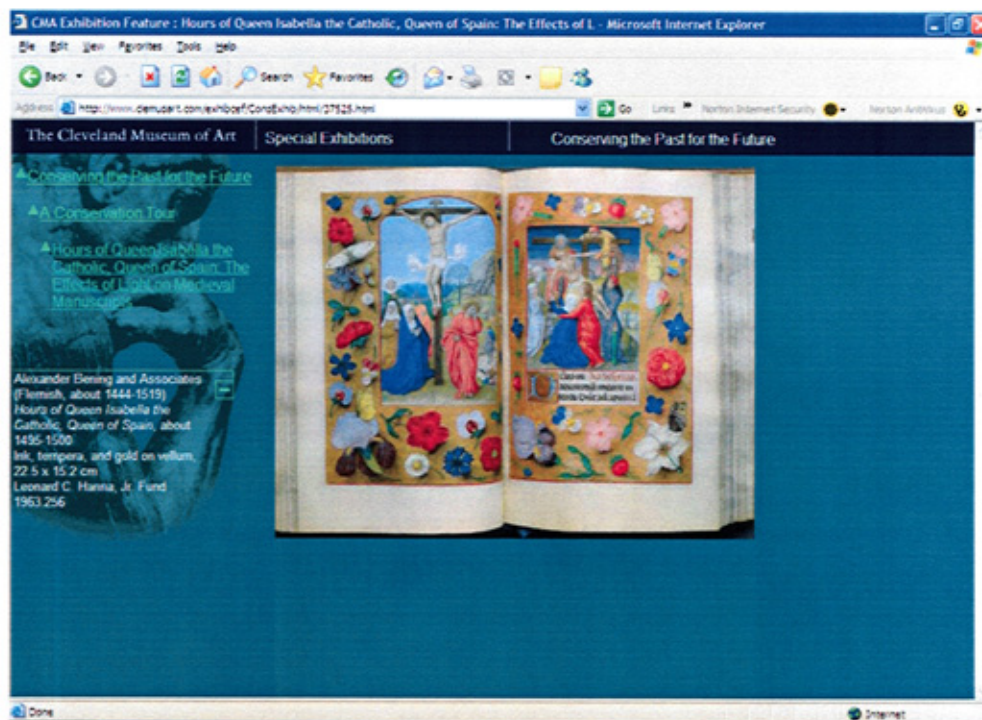


Illustrator: Margaret Tarrant, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1916)
<http://www.ortakales.com/illustrators/Tarrant2.html>



Figure XXX: Looking at DVA by Topic

Medieval Spanish Manuscripts: Hours of Queen Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain, about 1495-1500. The Cleveland Museum of Art:
<http://www.clemusart.com/exhibcef/ConsExhib/html/37525.html>



Post World War II Art: Pablo Picasso *Ulysses and the Sirens* (1947)
Tigertail Virtual Museum:
http://www.tigrtail.org/TIG/S_View/TVM/B/European/european.html

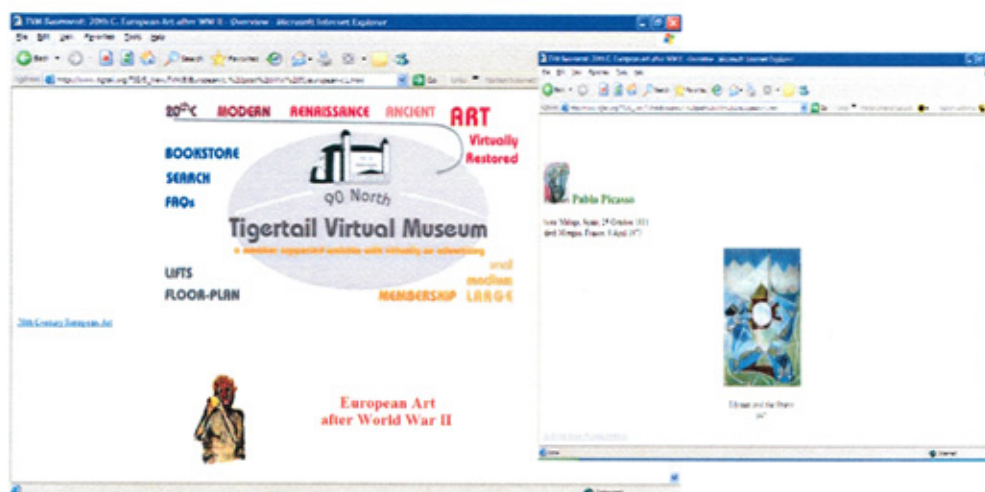
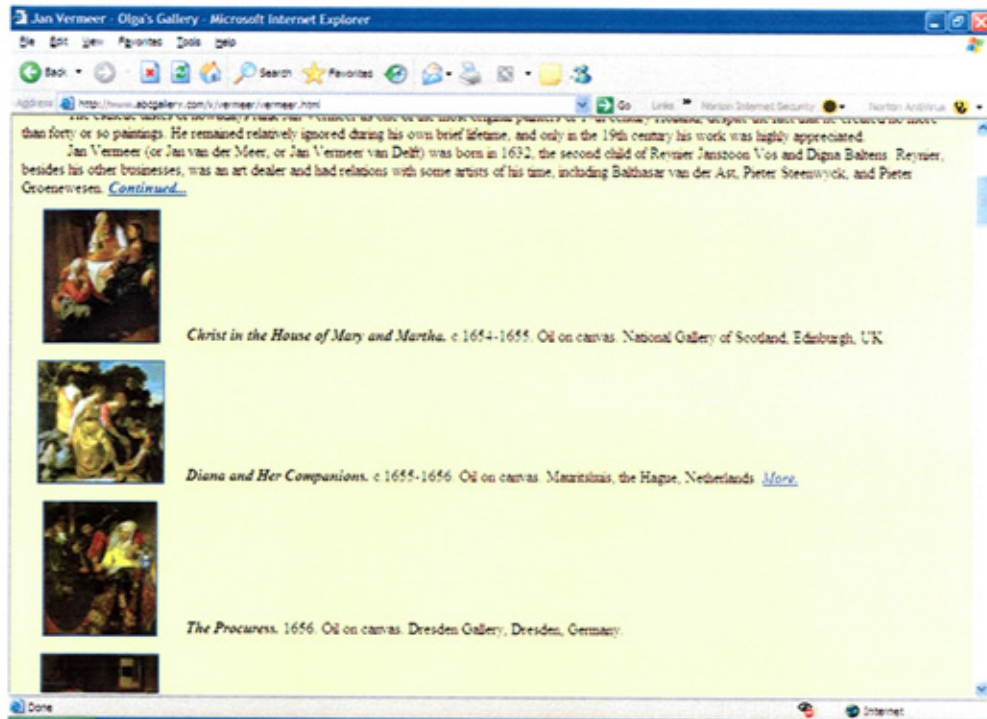


Figure XXX: Looking at DVA by Movement

Flemish School: Johannes Vermeer
Olga's Gallery <http://www.abcgallery.com/V/vermeer/vermeer.html>



Abstraction: Ronald Davis, Heat Fused Pixel Dust Paintings on "White" Metal: 2005 – 2006. [abstract-art.com http://abstract-art.com/index.shtml](http://abstract-art.com/index.shtml)

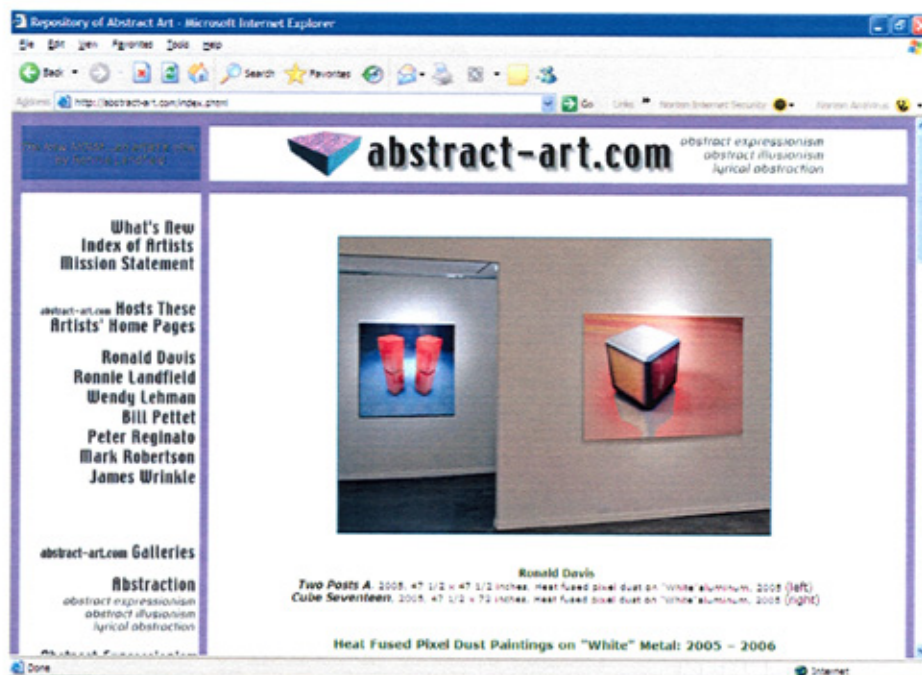
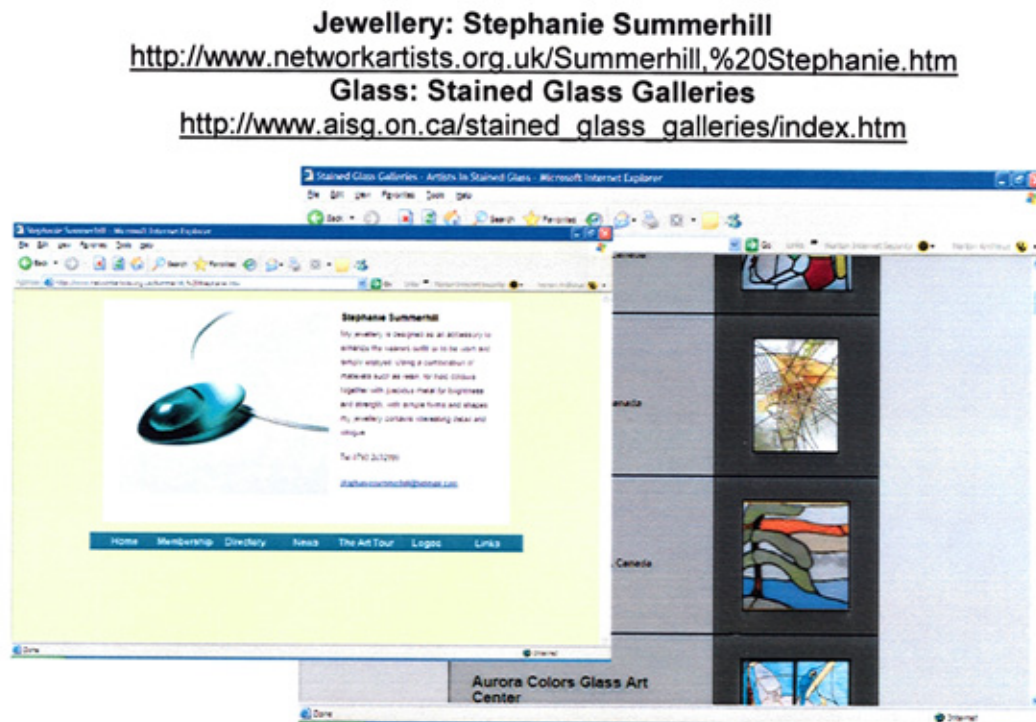


Figure XXX: Looking at DVA by Object



A further question was introduced to establish how users in the first instance discovered art on the web.

- *How / Why did you discover art on the Internet?*

Discovery in many cases was prompted by a need to find particular information e.g. a gallery to be visited, information regarding a particular artist's work, research to support online curation of their own work.

A number of respondents used the web for images and art related information in the context of their own working practice for example;

- *"I looked for art because I'm a painter too and I like to study other artists work"* (Respondent 10, Case Study Two).
- *"Writing articles on creative technology for government sponsored web site"* (Respondent FreePint Message Board, Case Study Two).
- *"I was College Librarian at the Fire Service College and wrote two pamphlets, one on St. Florian, the Patron Saint of Firefighters,*

and one on a famous (in fire circles!) painting called 'Saved' by Charles Vigor. For both I explored relevant art on the web and included some downloaded paintings" (Respondent 1, Case Study Two).

6.4.2: ICTs and *new space*

6.4.2.1: Providers and Resources: Virtual Space

In order to gain understanding of the context, (the Web) with particular reference to the type, nature and scale of the resources and providers, a mapping exercise was carried out. Based on the research objectives criteria was developed to search and 'hit' visual art Web pages and sites.

This activity began at the very start of the research and continued to the creation of the *Electronic Hypertext Document* (EHD) and was used to explore the 'what' and the 'how'. That is **what** kind of DVA resources are available and **how** (and where) access does occur.

The four criteria were defined as;

1. The **Resource Type**, how 'virtual' access was gained i.e. through a search engine, museum site, commercial or academic site.
2. **Search Terms** used to find the resource e.g. artist name, subject, medium, phrase.
3. Where **Physical Access** occurred, work, community space, home.
4. **Enhanced Content**, i.e. through provider subscription to resources. If access was gained via a community network space was there an element of enhanced resources.

This activity not only provided the researcher with her own experience and insight of searching, gaining access to DVA, but also insight into the level of provision and types of providers. However it was acknowledged that only the

individual could truly identify and describe their own subjective activity of choosing and searching for DVA as identified in the table *What do those individuals using new space to access DVA look at?* (Figure XXIX). Figure XXXI displays an example of each provider type identified and an example of the resources available.

Provider	
Government	Government Art Collection Operating within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Works of art from the Collection are displayed in British Government buildings both in the United Kingdom and around the world http://www.gac.culture.gov.uk/home/index.asp
Commercial	BritArt 'art you can buy' provides the user with the option to create their own thumb nail gallery and allow other users to view http://www.britart.co.uk/
Academic	The Fine Art Project 'pilot examples of work associated with and held in Higher Education Institutions which represent the value and influence of the artist practitioner in UK Fine Art Education.' http://vads.ahds.ac.uk/fineart/
Private	ArtMagick 'labour of love' and is tended to by an art lover in her spare time' offers the user the facility to create a virtual album of paintings http://www.artmagick.com/about.aspx
Local Authority	The northeast.com tomorrows history Selection of visual material primarily black & white photographs from the local studies library http://www.thenortheast.com/
Museum Service	Tyne & Wear Museum Service Offering access to information for the 11 galleries, museums and projects in the service. http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/index.php

Figure XXXI: Provider Types and Resources

6.4.2.2: Providers of Physical *new space*

Within the geographical boundary of Case Study One, Gateshead, the reference section of Gateshead Central Library was identified as the most appropriate point of access to the sample as detailed in the criteria *Resources Vision and Role* and discussed in Chapter 4 (4.10.1). This site was identified as the quintessence of the concept of *new space*, i.e. the coming together of the two distinct components the physical community space and the *virtual* space. The layout of the reference library's physical space is portrayed in Figure XXXII, this diagram was used to identify and capture how individuals

moved within and occupied this particular space. During observation Figure XXXII was used as a tool in data collection enabling the researcher to draw the path of the user as they moved around the physical area, noting which PC they used, their interaction with their immediate fellow users and any comments or gestures made.

The reference library is an open plan layout with a staff area and eight PCs around the outer walls, all of which provide Internet access. The PC open access area is separated from the traditional reference library/reading room by a glass screen. To enter the reference library users must walk through the library's Gallery. On entering the PC open access area the majority of users were observed as moving freely around the space.

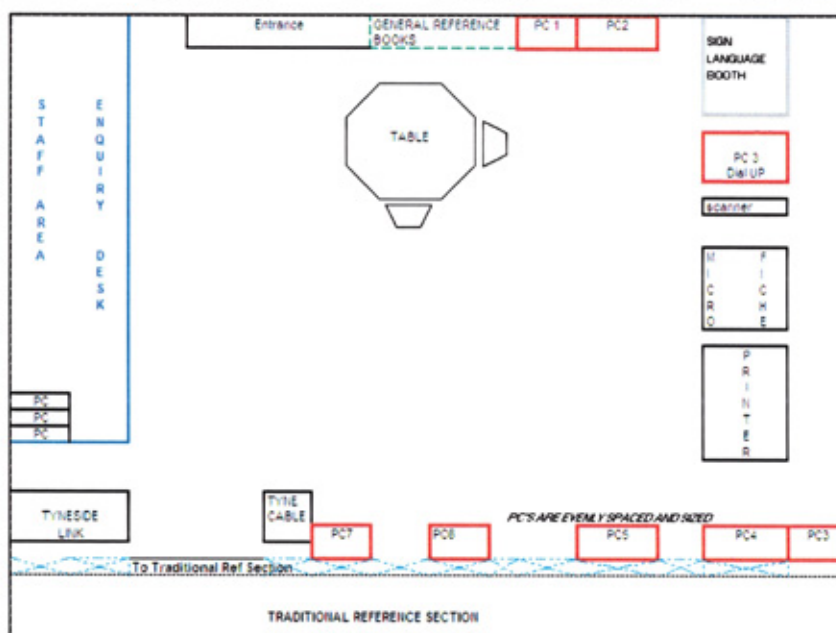


Figure XXXII:
Gateshead Central
Library Reference
Plan Layout

A number of relationships were identified in the use of this space and those relationships were recognised as being between:

physical space – people – virtual space
physical space – people
people – virtual space
people – people

The one common factor between all users was that they occupied and moved within the same physical space. Within this [physical] space users demonstrated a familiarity and a confidence with the space and with each

other. As users walked into the PC access area this familiarity was identified by their activity, gestures and body language, a nod to users or staff, a hand trailing across the mouse or keyboard as they passed through the area, a demonstrated understanding of how the service worked i.e. in the booking system for the PCs, the protocol of waiting your turn (**physical space – people**).

When the user was anchored to the screen through the activity in the virtual space they tended to become temporarily isolated or detached from the physical space and their fellow users engaging completely with their own activity on screen (**people - virtual space**).

Interaction (**physical space – people - virtual space**) between users ranged from

- A **comment**, the user turning from the screen to speak to their immediate neighbour
- A **shout**, turning into the physical space and expressing a frustration with the process of their virtual space activity.
- **Pointing**, to sharing their activity on screen with the physical space.

Due to the developing nature of the sample in the first case study site (i.e. becoming a hidden sample) an additional step in the fieldwork was introduced to determine if indeed the purpose of the user's visit to the library or neighbouring art gallery was to use the PC open access area and search for DVA.

As library and gallery user's entered the PC open access areas in both Gateshead Central Library and the neighbouring Shipley Art Gallery the researcher approached each individual to enquire of the purpose of their visit.

Over a period of five days the researcher alternating times and location asked the following three specific questions:

1. Are you about to use the Internet?

2. If yes, have you used the Internet to search for and view art?
3. Do you or have you ever used the pc here to view/search for visual art?

At the end of five days

- 39% of library and Shipley Art Gallery visitors would be using the PCs for Internet access.
- From these responses, 33% did use the Internet to look at visual art
- However, only 13% would use the library or gallery PCs to do so.

During the five day survey the most recurring response was

"I didn't know it [visual art] was there!"

*Survey of Library and Gallery Users Gateshead Central Library Shipley Art Gallery
15th –19th June 2001*

Use of the PCs in the library was primarily for email, job searches and international news. This was apparent during observation in all libraries in Gateshead. Observation in the Shipley Art Gallery online centre discovered that the space was considerably underused.

6.4.2.3: What motivates the individual to seek access to DVA within *new space*?

Why do some individuals seek out DVA resources and participate in this activity on a regular basis? What motivates the individual to seek access to DVA within this *new space*?

A number of themes emerged that drive the individual to seek out DVA. The relationship between use, the subject and object, the frequency that access occurs and the individual's consideration of the purpose of DVA as an 'everyday activity' can reveal the individual's motivation. The network display (Appendix VII) demonstrates this relationship of motivation to the *frequency [of use], use [of]* and *purpose* of DVA.

Specific motives for seeking out DVA were identified as:

- Curiosity.

- Research
 - As part of lifelong learning
 - To visit galleries which the individual would be unable to travel to
 - To consider pieces before buying
 - Find out about artists
- Pleasure
 - To enhance work
 - To find particular images

6.4.3: Use, Access and Personal Meaning

6.4.3.1: Use and Access

The following questions were used to discover the frequency and nature of the respondents searching and DVA activity and use within *new space*.

- *When was the first time you used a computer to look for an art subject?*
- *When was the last time you used a computer to look for an art subject?*
 - *Is this a regular activity during your normal week?*
- *How did you go about finding the art material?*
- *Is this an activity you do alone?*
- *When you use the computer to look for an art subject do you:*
- *Make a plan before you start to help you find the subject?*
- *When you have found the material what do you do next?*
- *How do you use the material?*

This set of questions was not presented to the focus group as their DVA activity was specifically within the confines of a specific task. Those respondents participating solely within the discussion boards did not provide sufficient data to indicate frequency of use.

The first time respondents used a PC to search for or look at an art subject dated from 1988, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, and 1999. The *new space* where this first encounter occurred was primarily the work place. Three respondents

did record their first access being from home, a public library and an academic institution. Since that initial encounter the point of access to DVA was increasingly the home. The frequency of usage range from yearly to twice daily, those respondents in the case study two site were identified particularly as frequent users.

The specific question how many times a day/week/ month was not posed as the research was not looking to measure this in any way rather to achieve a richer picture of the activity. However, in response to the questions *When was the last time you used a computer to look for an art subject?* and *Is this a regular activity during your normal week?* Case study two respondents recorded their activity as, “Daily”, “This morning”, “Yesterday” “One or two pictures a day”. This suggests that Case Study Two respondents search for DVA on a regular bases and in many cases as part of their daily activities.

Case Study One respondents indicated frequency of use on a monthly or weekly basis. This raises again the point made earlier under 6.2 the method in which respondents in both case study sites participated in the research reflects the context in which their own DVA activity occurred. This relationship can also be considered between the method of recruitment to participate within the research and the frequency of DVA activity.

In terms of finding aids all respondents used a search engine, in particular Google and HotBot. Finding aids were also supported by the use of journals, magazines and newsletters.

Only one respondent considered making a search plan before beginning their search activity. Once a search has been successful respondents tended to add the site to their favourites or Bookmark and in some cases print out or save the page to a folder.

Use of DVA ranges from work to pleasure for example:

"Searching for exhibitions and things -I did searching for when the quilt show started there is absolutely tons of information and I found a particularly good site for education" (Respondent 5, Case Study One).

"Pure pleasure I just enjoy looking the images" (Respondent 4, Case Study One).

"Captured images for background on computer to have to look at info on exhibitions to attend" (Respondent 2, Case Study One).

"I write about creative technology and the interplay between creativity and R&D" (Respondent 2, Case Study Two).

"Fascination, finding out, enjoyment, to utilise" (Respondent 1, Case Study Two).

The individuals, who can be described as frequent, pro-active users of DVA resources, facilitate their own searching activities and subsequent use of the resources. The chosen *new space* is predominately the home, in which the activity of searching and viewing occurs. This activity is carried out alone, but at times carried out on another person's behalf.

While demographic and personal information was not collected from either of the case study sites, responses revealed some common elements. Participants tended to be mature, of working age, and within both case studies participants originated from Gateshead (Case Study One), and a wider sample from the UK and USA (Case Study Two). Participants were a mix of actively creative individuals i.e. makers (for example in art and design), or were conscious of creativity and creative individuals around them.

6.4.3.2: Barriers

The aims and objectives originally set out to identify the concept of access and the barriers encountered as perceived and understood by the individual and providers. It was considered this would be significant for the use of such

resources. Barriers that may be encountered could include personal characteristics, social/interpersonal environmental or situational circumstances and information source characteristics (Wilson, 1981).

In responding to the needs of the research i.e. in a purposive sample and the emergence of a new and distinct community (a virtual community, the Web) determined the redundancy of these particular issues. The purposive sample criteria established the recruitment of users who were already accessing and using DVA resources. The self-selecting sample responding to the research website negated this particular issue of access and barriers by their very presence. In that all respondents had access to a PC, Internet access and the necessary skills and abilities to contribute to the discussion.

6.4.3.3: Value

The underlying principle of this research was that value resides uniquely within each individual, and is attributed by the individual in specific context. The aim was to interpret value as understood by the individual.

As identified earlier, the individual through an experience or event within his or her own life attributes value. For the purposes of this study value was determined as being generated not by the object, in this case DVA itself but by the experience of the holistic process [of access to DVA] within specific context [the individual's own *new space*]. Through the literature it was established that value is derived from the relationship between personal meaning, the DVA resource, the context in which access is achieved i.e. primarily in the individual's home using a search engine, and the integration of the results into the individual's everyday activity.

It was considered that a direct question on value might impose or imply a particular or type of response and in doing so detract from an understanding of value as a whole as defined in the previous paragraph. Therefore the interview questions and discussions were chosen to allow value to become apparent naturally and that a sense of value as unique to that individual would

emerge and be perceptible through the different voices of the individual respondents.

Value is discussed in Chapter 8 as a quality of an individual's experience rather than in the abstract or as a conceptual formula or table. In the analysis of the relationship between the elements of value the following were considered heuristically:

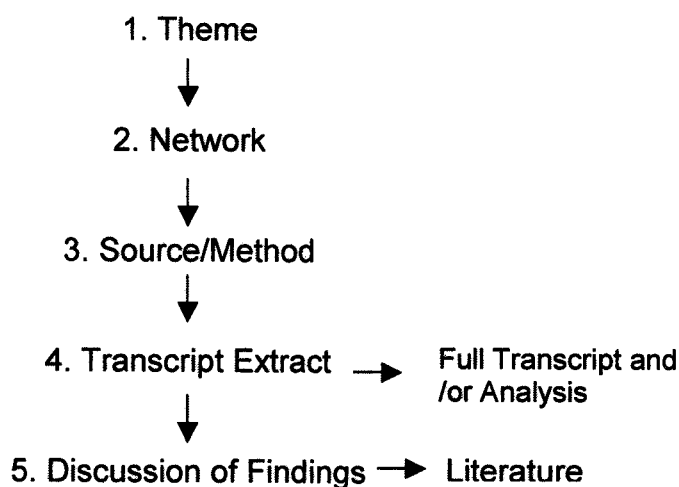
- The influence of the 'initial encounter' with visual art and the characteristics associated with that encounter in terms of personal meaning and choice.
- The significance to each individual of the context in which access occurs.
- The display of common features e.g. in the use of finding aids, search engines and choice of *new space*.

6.5: Analysis and the Electronic Hypertext Document

Taking full advantage of the hypertext medium enabled the analysis process to be demonstrated dynamically, a new tool for accessing the data and the data analysis and interpretation process in a *new space*. It permitted a complete audit trail back through the steps of interpretation, analysis to the raw data. The process of analysis involved the continuous engagement with the data searching for repeating notions, commonalities and relationships based on the *Features of Significance/Value Matrix* [Appendix IV], the source and methods matrix (Figure XI) and the development of relational networks in the data analysis software.

The analyses of the emerging themes can be explored by re-tracing the researcher's steps through the analysis process. For example, to explore the analysis and findings of the theme '**art helps make sense of the world**' (ASense) the theme is recorded in the *Features of Significance/Value matrix* (Appendix IV) and linked directly to all the associated data sets, the output of the analysis process within the data analysis software and the primary

documents. This 'audit trail' connects the researcher's method of analysis with the primary documents (raw data) and this process can be described in the following five steps, each step is displayed in Appendix VIII.



Step 1. The *features of significance/value matrix* is first selected to identify a theme to explore e.g. *ASense*.

Step 2. The selected theme is linked directly to the data analysis software network view providing a visual representation of the theme and its relationship to corresponding themes e.g. *Everyday Thing*

Step 3. The network view is linked to the *source and method matrix* in order to identify and verify the multiple source and methods of data collection that applies to that particular theme e.g. *Cultural/Social in everyday life*

Step 4. The *source and method matrix* links to a primary document e.g. an extract of an interview transcript (raw data) demonstrating the evidence at source. This also offers a link to the full transcript and the relevant presentation of the data analysis.

Step 5. Finally the primary document is linked to the relevant discussion of the findings and interpretation within the EHD.

6.6: Summary

The analysis presented here provides a rich and detailed picture of the case study sites. By framing the presentation of the data analysis around the three research aims the focus on the individual and the potential of DVA resources has been maintained and brings to the forefront those themes and issues that have emerged from the research.

Here the notion of the 'dance' continues as the emergent themes move within and across all three aims. The consideration of learning as a social function, a lifelong process, is inextricably bound with what and why individuals seek out in terms of DVA. Implicit in this is the role visual art plays in this process and that too of the providers of both physical and virtual spaces and resources. The dance between use, motivation and personal meaning has enabled the researcher to draw on those themes in the consideration of value. The nature of this study was rooted in the individual and Chapter 7 draws those individuals together, moving towards an interpretation of the analysis by allowing the voices of each individual respondent to emerge.

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Chapter 7: Case Studies: Participant Voices

7.1 Introduction

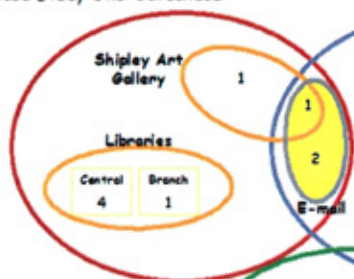
A vignette of each participant was created to provide a sense of each individual in the context of his or her own visual art interests and activities. Each vignette drawn from the transcripts and guided by the research questions and the emerging themes offers a picture and insight of each individual in terms of

- When and why they began using the web to view DVA
- What DVA they particularly like
- An insight to their thoughts and feelings on visual art, culture and life.

By creating and presenting the vignettes in this way the different voices of the research participants emerge. Therefore the author has deliberately omitted her own dialogue in this chapter to allow the participant's voices to come through and enable the reader to experience a continuity in the reading that would have become broken by the researcher's own dialogue.

At the beginning of each case study section i.e. 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 the corresponding detail from Figure XVIII has been included to identify the number of respondents and their location and method of participation in the research. Each number in the diagram represents the number of respondents participating in that particular case study site.

Case Study One: Gateshead



7.2: Case Study One: Gateshead

Nine respondents in the Case Study One site were interviewed. Four respondents were interviewed in the Central Library and were users of the *new space* only and not DVA and therefore were used to contextualise the concept and use of *new*

space. For that reason those respondents are not included here but a vignette of each of those respondents is provided in Appendix IX.

Three respondents participated via email, respondents 1 and 2 accessed DVA from home, respondent 2 visited the case study site the Shipley Art Gallery never taking advantage of the PC access area while there. Respondent 3 did not access DVA but the richness of the respondent's input in terms of her thoughts and understanding of Gateshead, visual art and culture was considered too important to exclude and therefore has been included here and contributes to that particular discourse of visual art and the meaning of the term culture.

Below are the 'voices' of these three respondents:

Respondent 1

"I live in Gateshead – the first thing that comes to mind is "Bleak"

I like a wide variety of art that includes sculpture, glass, paintings, art installations, woodcarvings etc.

I became aware of art as a very young child as my mother studied fine art at Sunderland University before she married. Our home was filled with artwork, from my mother's own work to prints and books about other artists. This provided me with a window, a view that sparked and fuelled my interest in art.

My home is full of artwork that hangs on all my walls. From the moment I wake I am welcomed by a variety of images and colours. I think art is important as it can offer a multitude of things that stimulates not only the eye but also cognitive thought. It offers diversity, culture and beauty-an opportunity that can feed one's imagination and fuel inspiration. Art in its various forms should be available to all the people. It should be inclusive as opposed to the exclusive form of high culture.

I have visited many art galleries in the UK and abroad. From the Musee d Orsay to Tate Modern & Tate Britain, I also visit local galleries in the northeast. I do not visit as frequently as I used to due to ill health.

Views on public art in Gateshead

A) Colin Rose's Victorian Bakeshop along Sunderland Road in Felling. I view it as a witty memory of a bygone age. This piece of work most definitely enhances this space, a place that would most probably be a bricked up or boarded and otherwise quite dull.

b) Colin Rose's Rolling Moon on the banks of the river Tyne. I think this is fantastic! It is very modern and beautifully engineered. The sphere of the moon glints wonderfully when the light catches it; it always makes me think of what the future may bring us. The banks of the river were at one time rather dull. This artwork has changed the landscape by introducing a futuristic design and therefore making it a more interesting and intriguing place.

c) Antony Gormley's The Angel on the A1 to the Team Valley. This design is massive and I love it. I particularly like the material it is made of-steel and copper-and the way in which this material will age. The material of this design represents for me the decay of the northern industrial base. The Angel is the largest sculpture in the UK and it has a huge impact. It can be seen from a great distance. It is a fantastic design that provides a monumental view.

I would love to see more artwork in our community. Gateshead is generally a bleak area and I think therefore some artwork introduced into the community could definitely enhance the lives of those who inhabit a dreary area. I would love to see some modern sculptures covering issues that affect our everyday living. Its good that the riverside has been cleaned up and regenerated however I am concerned with the exclusivity that the area projects-expensive homes, expensive pubs, clubs and eating-places.

I love the new millennium bridge and I am really looking forward towards the opening of the Baltic. I think these developments will certainly enhance the

views and experience of visiting the Tyne. On a personal level it will give me the opportunity to enjoy more art.

I think there is a lot of pretence and elitism about being cultural. So much is made of high and low culture. Culture can mean anything really. It can cover a way of life, language, food, music, writing etc. In everyday life it affects me in terms of the book or newspaper I choose to read, the music I listen to and the choice of viewing on TV available to me. I use a home computer, I use the Internet for research and leisure including art here is an example."



No Title/Date Submitted by Respondent with email interview

Respondent 2

"The first time I used a PC to look at DVA was 1994, I use Lycos Search Engine, at home usually alone but occasionally for and with my mother-in-law who is a ceramic sculptor. I like pottery, jewellery, and ceramic sculpture. The last time I used my work computer looking for museums, which I might not be able to visit in reality. I also look for images to download of favourite artists. I search for pottery, buying ceramics information on artists, possibility to purchase, occasionally to download images for background on the computer and to have a look at information on exhibitions to attend. When I was about 3 or 4, my mum took me often to Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum I remember the Egyptian Stone Sarcophagus. You can't separate art from everyday life;

patterns exist in everything, including mathematical equations, and physical laws."

Respondent 3

"I live in Gateshead, when I think of Gateshead I think grotty town centre, wonderful parks and gardens. I like modern art, pop art, photographic art and sculpture. Basically anything that is not an "old master". I probably became interested post school days.

Art is an everyday thing only in as much as I consciously look out for certain pieces of public art as I travel around the region each day. I never fail to admire the millennium bridge as I pass by and always look out for the angel to see if I can see it from wherever I may be. They cheer me up and give me a sense of pride in where I come from.

I believe strongly in public art. Not everyone will like it but if it provokes any sort of reaction then at least it gets people talking together. It also provides a means of symbolising regional identity. Other forms of art such as in galleries etc are also important as forms of expression or comment, both by the artist and for the person viewing them.

Art is for everybody particularly public art, which is there for all to see. In order to experience other forms of art, the "consumer" must make a conscious decision to view it.

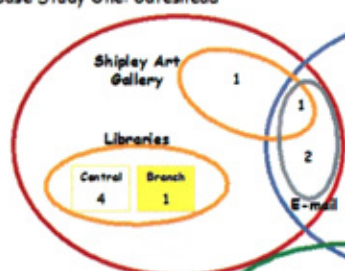
[Public Art I am aware of] The angel of the north a1 at Birtley, Superb, it attracts visitors. The flying sheet (sorry, don't know it's proper title) Windmill Hills I like it very much, it makes me smile. I don't believe it changes the area. "The woman in the cauldron" Gateshead High Street, totally dreadful, I suppose it takes your mind off the state of the High Street so perhaps it serves some purpose.

I visit exhibitions, galleries museums generally the Laing Art Gallery or wherever an exhibition is appearing that appeals to me, also sometimes on holiday abroad.

Gateshead Quays is wonderful at last Gateshead is losing its identity as a poor relation to Newcastle. The mixture of cultural activities music, cafés and restaurants will be a welcome addition for Gateshead residents and will also bring more visitors to the area. I look forward to visiting them all. I am already a huge fan of the bridge and am glad it has retained its title as the Gateshead Millennium bridge and not been "hi-jacked" by Newcastle as they tried to do with the metro centre and the angel.

It will be good to have an area where the "cultural" activities are included in the whole package rather than say just visiting an exhibition in isolation. It will attract a wider mix of people. Being given the opportunity to sample many different forms of art. Visual, musical, theatre, highbrow, lowbrow and everything in-between it may not be all to your taste, but at least you can develop an informed opinion. I have my own Internet access at home but don't use it to look at art."

Case Study One: Gateshead



The following is from the respondent who sought access to DVA and was interviewed in one of the branch libraries within the case study site.

Respondent 4

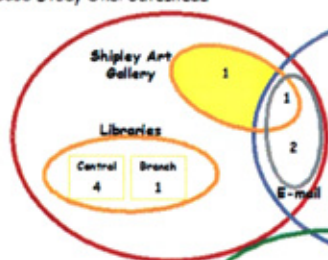
"I live in Gateshead and am now retired which I describe as a wonderful emptiness. I went to a computing course (an adults evening class in Gateshead) there was no internet training but the tutor said that the internet was coming to Gateshead Central Library soon and we (me and my husband) made a mental note that this was going to happen. As soon as Internet

access was available we visited Gateshead Central Library and were given a basic introduction to the Internet. I then went to an adult evening course near my home Learning how to search, although the tutor was very knowledgeable he couldn't relay this knowledge to the class. It was at Gateshead Central Library I discovered art on the Internet.

I might be out shopping and will pop in [Branch library] for half an hour and look for a favourite subject, not necessarily a direct trip to the library to use the PCs. There are a number of favourite artist particularly Vermeer and as a member of the arts appreciation class any interest that is sparked from there. At my branch library it is rare that all the PCs are being used or that anybody is waiting for their turn. I have sat next to other users while on the PC but there was never any conversation or interaction.

I enjoy looking at the images particularly Vermeer, I have a little notebook with details of every website visited, found or reviewed I come across. I'm also a member of the NASO, national adult school organisation, which has been around for 200 years. Every week they issue booklets and people choose topics to study and members take turns to talk about their chosen subject I normally choose an art subject."

Case Study One: Gateshead



The following voice provides insight into a respondent working at the Shipley Art Gallery and their DVA activities.

Respondent 5

"Before I moved here [North East] I used to read about it in the papers I thought it sounded an interesting place always seemed to be lots happening and I suppose that's what I think of the arts going on, I think its dead interesting how the angel of the north has become a talking point. Its also interesting you know how the bridge came in everybody was really like there was a great buzz.

I do use it [Internet] quite a lot, I use it here [at work Shipley Art Gallery] I use it a lot searching for exhibitions and things particularly searching for when the quilt show started there is absolutely tons of information and I found a particularly good site for education.

I haven't got a PC at home, I haven't used it at this library [Gateshead Central Library] but I have at my local [Newcastle] library. But I do use the Internet at my friends they have got it, we hunt together, you see the only thing with the library is you have a really limited time you can only have half an hour or an hour and when you are at your mates you can be on forever. I mean seeking information together you start looking for something and then it starts taking you somewhere and you know your kind of sharing information. I remember being nervous being online how far it took you and being amazed at how you search for something how quick it takes you and are like linked. I picked it up fairly easily I've had no training in it [using the Internet], I mean I had used a computer word processing, I guessed quickly I just try the various search engines and see which ones come up sometimes search engines don't give you what you want. I don't think I could use Google from the Gallery. They are Tyne & Wear Museum and Gateshead council run so there are restrictions on their interface and searching for example there are many chat lists on quilts but because of council and museum policy we are barred from accessing these.

I particularly use it for work but looking at them at home, I use it a lot again looking at the arts sites and careers and kid things anything for kids on the Internet.

I've been looking for eighteenth century costumes. In the first instance it was just general information and then I started looking for ideas that relate to activities and stuff. Costumes and that also linked to sites that had patterns for costumes. I couldn't quite picture in my mind what eighteenth century costume looked like. That was the initial impetus to kind of go and see if there were any pictures. It is amazing how much stuff there is.

It [searching] always seems to follow the same kind of pattern anyway. I'll go to it for general information and usually links are quite good aren't they and they kind of take you up as with the quilting thing [a recent exhibition] there was so much stuff about quilting and there was this fantastic site loads of links and education activities that people had done with quilts I just had reams and reams of stuff that I could use. We decided to get the shapes that we use in the exhibition all these shapes because there was a whole programme that teaches going to an exhibition, quilty word games and things like that.

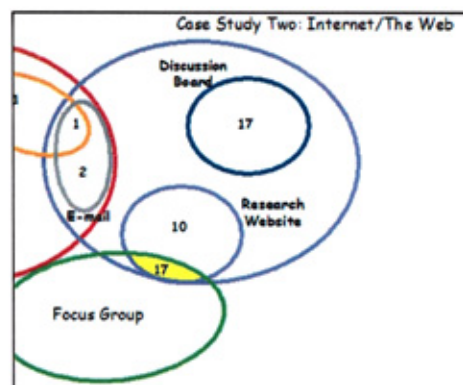
The danger is you do get side tracked because links will take you here but in the library I suppose you go and look up something specific there is always that chance you will see something else cause libraries are quite good at putting things together. But I suppose because this is so quick and a lot you can forget and don't know how to get back to. In a book you can mark them I suppose you can mark them on this but I've never really done that I loose myself, I didn't realise you could actually till quite recently my friend told me - oh just add it to the favourites.

There was one site an American site I discovered it by accident and I spent ages just looking that's what we want for Tyne & Wear Museums when we get our website. I can particularly use that kind of thing they were looking at objects and if we could get some cards made up of the objects I could use."

To maintain a connection with the voices of the respondents in the Case Study One Site the Focus Group offered the opportunity to bridge the gap between the first case study (Gateshead) and the second (the Web), the focus group comprised of individuals who were familiar with Gateshead's visual art activity and in that context uncover their experiences and multiple perspectives of viewing DVA.

7.3 The Focus Group

Prior to the focus group's period of DVA viewing, the group were asked to make a note of their expectations of the experience (searching for, accessing and viewing DVA). Following the period of activity a third questionnaire was developed for the focus group and was



used to gather data about their expectations of the experience in the context of lifelong learning and art and culture as an 'everyday thing'

As the focus group was presented with a purposeful task rather than a 'natural' regular activity, their 'voices' have been constructed on the basis of their experience of that task and their thoughts regarding the task and Life Long Learning. The presentation of the vignettes were created to provide an insight to each member's understanding of:

- The use of DVA
- Their own experience and expectations
- The Learning Society
- Lifelong learning

Not all members responded to every question or commented on all of the above points. In some cases members considered the concept of visual art as part of everyday life and the meaning of the term culture.

Focus Group: Respondent 1

Ease of Use: "The content was affordable and easy to navigate and encouraged me to visit a gallery."

Expectations: "not sure what to expect before beginning the task."

Learning Society: "DVA could be considered an educational tool – a pleasure to all and accessible everyday."

Lifelong Learning: "Enjoyment of art and history can improve an education experience. I was impressed with how possible it was to get affordable art. I enjoyed and was surprised that viewing art in this way could be informative."

Focus Group: Respondent 2

Expectations: "not sure what to expect, the aesthetic with no time restrictions unlike gallery opening times made the experience more relaxing freedom to look at what you want."

Learning Society: "it is 24/7 and helps to appreciate art."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "it already is but it shouldn't be."

Culture: "can be anything from Michelangelo to graffiti a lifelong learner might want to know such things."

Focus Group: Respondent 3

Expectations: "I thought might find some interesting things about society. I thought it would surprise me and it did."

Learning Society: "depends what you can learn form art."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "I don't know probably see it and don't realise."

Culture: "what culture you come from affects your learning and how you learn you pick things up by learning about other cultures."

Focus Group: Respondent 4

Expectations: "To see something new and interesting."

Learning Society: "quicker ways to see and learn about art, nowadays people are more concerned with money and don't have time to visit museums, can be richer in knowledge of any kind."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Everyone from time to time has the need to visualise art. It [visual art] is not just art but history culture fun."

Experience: "I just found out that I can see art on Internet and it is almost as good as being in the gallery. It was very interesting, as sometimes, I feel the need to see some art, but I don't always have the time to go to a museum or a gallery. Now I know what to do next time."

Focus Group: Respondent 5

Expectations: "Not sure that I'd see a variety of different art mediums but didn't expect them to be so different."

Learning Society: "Anyone with access to the Internet can learn from online galleries, since the Internet is free in so many libraries I think this really does correspond to Lifelong Learning."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Art can be beautiful, challenging and uplifting it can catch your imagination and I think everybody could do with that."

Culture: "Should certainly be part of the ideal information society I think we have a little way to go before we worry about that."

Focus Group: Respondent 6

Expectations: "To see a wide range of art related features and activities."

Learning Society: "I think it [DVA] does, the access to information, which you can retrieve from the Internet, is easier to attain and quicker than going to an Art gallery down in London. Each individual can learn different forms of art and learn new forms at the same time."

Experience: "Interesting educational."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "It should be an everyday thing, we use art i.e. graphics for advertising for billboards, magazines, window dressing. We use art in so many different forms of communication."

Culture: "There are so many different cultures that have so many different forms of communicating in Information and Learning society. Different cultures have different ways of expressing their opinions, working, learning and giving out information."

Focus Group: Respondent 7

Expectations: "The aesthetic, information value of the sites and broaden knowledge."

Learning Society: "Yes, I feel very strongly that appreciating (and participating in) art is valuable and should be encouraged through education."

Experience: "When it works I approve of it. It allows the viewer to take a risk in that they can sample art for free without having to pay expensive entrance fees to view exhibits they might not enjoy. I think it also opens up the art world to those who might not have the opportunity to exhibit in traditional outlets."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "If it were accepted as an everyday thing than everybody could be an artist in his or her own right and it would no longer be regarded as an elitist activity. I know this sounds idealistic and naive but I don't care!"

Culture: "To create a truly integrated Information and Learning Society the inverted snobbery of the working classes (if the term 'working class' is still in vogue!) needs to be recognised and addressed."

Focus Group: Respondent 8

Expectations: "To see traditional art galleries online, exhibits, examples of their permanent collections, and general museum information and contact details."

Learning Society: "It captures and expresses emotions in a visual experience. Art helps you understand the world and the human experience."

Experience: "To learn more easily about pieces good for reference and planning but not replace actually seeing the work."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Yes people who do not have access to seeing art can at least be exposed to some aspects of this field."

Culture: "Becomes more integrated as the world becomes smaller."

Focus Group: Respondent 9

Expectations: "To compare the different attitudes towards and the treatment of, art on the Internet."

Learning Society: "It might not help personal ambitions in terms of job prospects, but a learner may find they feel they are reaching their potential more as people, becoming happier: something that is surely important to the Information and Learning Society. It is opening up another mode of life."

Experience: "Potentially exciting, able to access many pieces of work."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "And it may lead to encouraging creativity (escapism, release etc?). To appreciate other's methods of expression is a satisfying end in itself: to develop personal thoughts and feelings feels good in a society that does not often hold that there is much significance in this capacity."

Culture: "Potentially it allows art to be open to all users, but really, how accessible it is questionable (obscurity of directories etc), and its capacity for imparting knowledge regarding art (though art is probably more about personal response anyway...) is limited, at least judging by the sites visited (often the priority is a commercial or promotional one)."

Focus Group: Respondent 10

Expectations: "Differences between art sites."

Learning Society: "Significant in an information and learning society."

Experience: "The quickest way to view art : but can't see or feel the texture of the work."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Yes depending on your point of view."

Focus Group: Respondent 11

Expectations: "To be interesting and learn something new relaxing and enjoyable."

Learning Society: "A good way to promote Lifelong Learning no restrictions: requires access to a computer and presupposes that everyone can use one so this facility might not be open to some people."

Experience: "A bit like going round the gallery with a headset as I also got information about the painter and the painting. Helped me re-evaluate my own definition of the word and will help me to appreciate more things as art in the future."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "If a person appreciates art, enjoys looking at it or creating it then this should be part of their everyday lives don't think it should be forced upon everyone. If a person is not interested in it in any way they should be encouraged to concentrate on other interests."

Culture: "Culture is definitely a significant element in the Information and Learning Society. It is part of everyday life for many people either as part of their jobs or their leisure activities it is just one element and it should not be allowed to dominate."

Focus Group: Respondent 12

Expectations: "To be fun ways of looking at art and normal way in a gallery."

Learning Society: "It is significant to learn about each other to include them in society."

Experience: "It broadened my awareness in a variety of ways."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Yes a lot of messages can be put across by art probably more successfully than text: helps creativity and awareness of your surroundings."

Culture: "Allows the appreciation of art and the opportunity to form own opinions in a non-pressured environment and enhance knowledge of the art world."

Focus Group: Respondent 13

Expectations: "Not sure: just pictures or educational?"

Learning Society: "Allows people to view different forms of art, think about what art actually is, how they perceive it etc. learning, developing your knowledge."

Experience: "A good way of combining history and art portrayed historical issues and art of the period."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Yes images are important. Art has meaning and thought behind it. It makes you think, escape from reality, express feelings."

Focus Group: Respondent 14

Expectations: "To learn something about art, view new pieces of art."

Learning Society: "Greater access to art and learning can begin at home socially inclusive provides a virtual learning space where everyone can access it."

Experience: "Brilliant way of bringing art closer to people immediacy found information that I might not have found in a [physical] gallery."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Quite often it isn't or people don't think that it is very important. Art can come in many different shapes and formats. Being able to view art like this provides everyday access to everyone. Art should be an everyday thing because it is not socially exclusive, everyone can view and appreciate art and think many different things about it. People can look at the same piece of art and perceive it to be and signify many different things. Art provides a visual insight into the past."

Culture: "A learning society is a culture because you can learn from everyday things."

Focus Group: Respondent 15

Expectations: "Not too much always cynical of art."

Learning Society: "It makes people feel a sense of community and that someone somewhere is trying to improve upon their lives visually so maybe someone elsewhere is making real improvements."

Experience: "I realised I don't appreciate art in a conventional sense, oil paintings and posters are boring but [flip flop flyin] kept me on the site longer than I thought."

Culture: "We learn from this and what makes our country."

Focus Group: Respondent 16

Expectations: "To see art that cannot be seen in other places collections with links to information: art that expresses a view and makes me think."

Learning Society: "Helps the process of Lifelong Learning art is very important in life to put things in new contexts makes think about the world."

Experience: "It depends on the purpose."

Visual Art as part of Everyday life: "Yes."

Culture: "Everybody can look at nice and interesting things that may make them think about the world."

Focus Group: Respondent 17

Expectations: "Art limited in scope."

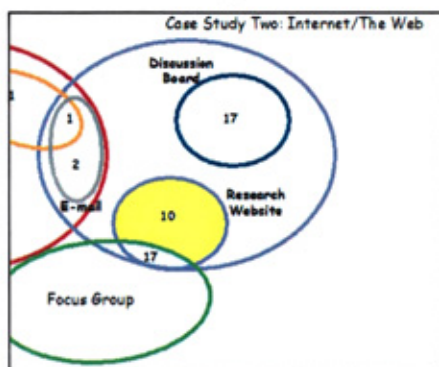
Learning Society: "Any opportunity to experience anything positive corresponds to the ethos of the learning society and life long learning."

Experience: "The flip flop flyin website made me laugh out loud, which i guess is a significant reaction, in a way I think that traditional art online (pictures) still doesn't interests me. Effective use of being websites."

Culture: "Hard to have a 'learning society' where 'culture' was not valued."

The Focus Groups' use of *new space* and participation using the research web site maintained a natural connection between the voices in Gateshead and those voices in the Web community.

7.4: Case Study Two: The Web



The case study two sample consisted of twenty-seven respondents, all actively using DVA in *new space*. Ten of the respondents used the research website to answer the two phased interview questions, below is a vignette of each of those respondents. Each

vignette offers an insight into how each respondent:

- Searches and uses DVA
- What 'type' of DVA they look at
- Their cultural activities, interests and perspectives
- How their initial interest in [visual] art developed

Respondent 1

"I am a college Librarian for the Fire Service College in New South Wales; and the author of two pamphlets, one on St. Florian, the Patron Saint of Fire fighters, and one on a famous (in fire circles!) painting called 'Saved' by Charles Vigor.

The first time I used a computer to look for an art subject was in 1995. I use Hot Bot and Google to search the Internet several times a year, a CD-ROM - once or twice, Gallery databases - once or twice a year.

The last time I used the internet to look for art was after watching a programme on Joseph Turner at the same time as doing something else and caught a glimpse of a painting of which I wasn't aware, and which was of subjects dear to my heart. I didn't catch the name but I used Google to search for "Joseph William Mallard Turner" (if I've got those two middle names the right way round!) and moon and sea. I think it was the first hit. I found several versions, with quite a variation in colour.

I have used a computer at The National Gallery, and at The Tate. I have used a computer at work when it was work related but now mostly use it at home and am alone.

Mostly I look at paintings for specific reasons. Sometimes I look for specific subjects to illustrate something (unicorn for the unicorn catalogue!) cats, for varying reasons.

Margaret Tarrant's art work because I remembered it from my childhood. The main reason for you to look for art on the Internet is fascination, finding out, enjoyment, to utilise."

Respondent 2

"I am a web author for a company intranet which involves capture and creation of images and an artist in leisure time. I am compelled to paint as essential as breathing I want to leave a tangible legacy. My father and grandfather were professional fine artists. I like art as a consumer, new media art - sites of art specifically designed for the web - 3D graphics, animations, and multimedia.

To me its [culture] a crucial part of being an individual and being able to communicate with my fellow human beings. Culture is part of life, without it, life would be unbearable.

Our culture defines who we are. Some aspects, for example our religious belief or lack of it and how that changes over our lifetime, are essential parts of our personality. Others like musical tastes are determined by our experiences and perhaps our physiology (some people are tone deaf or colour blind).

I do not agree with much of post-modernism and believe that the development of art through time is a reflection of the development of humanity. Cultural development is continuous and provides continuity. Without at least some

appreciation of the history of culture (the arts as a whole) and thought, people have a weak cultural identity and this can lead to societies without any clear structure or direction. As society becomes more democratic and egalitarian, it becomes more important that everyone has some notion of the cultural group they are members of, if only to change the culture or themselves (the enlightenment and the French revolution for example).

For me personally, culture provides a continual source of enjoyment both as an active participant and as a passive observer. The visual arts are an inexhaustible part of that and the Internet is making more of their content and context easily available from all over the world and at the same time enabling all sorts of new art forms.

I use the PC alone at Home and or the office, I use Google, Karnak and DMOZ (a web directory) to search for images. Last time I used the Internet to look for art was to follow up a news item in a US weekly academic newsletter. I also look at interesting web sites maps / pictures /and the analysis of tombs in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. My main interest was web site design plus general interest in the past. My Interest is in medieval history searching for pictures from manuscripts and for sources for a weekly news page."

Respondent 3

"I make paintings, sculpt with clay, take photos, make art on my PC. I exhibit and enter for the local Open competition each year. I have been studying art for the last 6 years at evening classes and workshops, and painting in my spare time with the aim being to make it my full time occupation when economic conditions allow.

Without culture life is so dull. Art and music are lifeblood to me, and I'd not survive long without them.

The last search I carried out using the Copernic and Google search engines, I also receive an email alert from the British Medical Journal every week and there was a link to story about Damian Hirst's new show called "Medicate". I

then did a search on Google to see if there were more images or words on the net.

I normally search alone from home or at work in our Cyber Café, Why? For any form or type [DVA] that interests me, but abstract or contemporary art primarily. Mainly 20th century, particularly post the Second World War, and current contemporary work, but I do like to trace influences back beyond this period. I prefer abstraction over other styles, but I don't rule anything out, the topics such as life, music, world events...

For study purposes, I wanted to learn about specific artists, exhibitions and where I could purchase materials. I also wanted to display my own work. The first time I searched for [DVA] was in 1998.

My interest in Visual Art was really kick-started by seeing articles in the Sunday colour supplements during the 1970's, but I've always enjoyed art it was a long time ago, but in my scrap books are clippings of Jackson Pollock's work, Patrick Caulfield, David Hockney etc."

Respondent 4

"Once a month or less I visit one of the many art galleries in the city I live in or the museum. [When I was younger] my parents expected us to choose what we liked for our walls and change it. My parents let us choose our own pictures from a very early age. My mother had several books with pages that she allowed us to frame. The first picture I remember spending my own money on was a Keene about age 9. Every room [home] has prints, photos and my screen savers are always art. Plus - I consider even the way I put together my clothes a form of art. I can't imagine not having things I enjoy looking at, at home, even if I don't always have the time to admire them. My teacups are works of art.

The first time used a computer to look for art was 1998; I use Google, newsletter subscriptions or a written article for references. I generally search

alone at home, for an art galley I have visited also generally an interest in historic -or someone I have seen at a gallery.

I Like impressionists - all Picasso - Mondrian - Van Gogh, I own some more representational stuff by living artists photos with an edge."

Respondent 5

"I am a private collector, and a director of an art gallery. The first time I used a PC to look at DVA was late 1999. That was to research, for curiosity and a desire to source art outside the confines of the gallery circuit; to get away from the iceberg mentality of the gallery system.

Research was into e-commerce and its feasibility in a gallery website, looking at the development of my own website. This site aims to capture the warmth of the northeast I'm not interested in particularly selling on line but will provide a virtual gallery a listing and a database. We need to change the thinking of the North East, who is culturally inhibited, to attract new buyers and change this attitude. Technology means there are no boundaries and the traditional art boundaries are ready for breaking.

I use Portals, Search engines, I keep an eye on the press for anything new, or use catalogues from exhibitions advertisements or reviews in art journals (e.g. Art Review, Royal Academy and Tate magazines, etc) and the mainstream press. Catalogues from exhibitions or art fairs, there are a limited number of good sites but those that are good enhance the experience of the encounter e.g.

www.britart.com

www.londonart.co.uk

www.artconnections.co.uk

www.wills-art.co.uk

www.claphamartgallery.com

I do this [search for DVA] at home alone at least once a week. This has developed from a life long interest, which has turned into an academic path and into a business. There is a merging an overlapping.

I like to view paintings, figurative, landscape, abstract - in most media. When I have found the material I contact the gallery or distributor to view. I rarely purchase over the Internet."

Respondent 6

"I've just read your message "Using the web to look at visual art." I use the web myself to check out other artists websites. Also I love to look at famous painters website i.e. Matisse, Picasso etc.

I have my own website which has helped me enormously. By that I mean folks, regardless of where they are in the world, can view my paintings. I get approx 1000 hits a week. Although I have sold quite a few paintings - 6 in total since my website was created in May - it is obviously not very many.

I doubt very much if any artist could rely on their website in order to sell enough artworks to make a living. The Internet is no substitute for making contacts on a personnel level or, for that matter, word of mouth.

Hope what I've said is of some help. Hope you get an opportunity to visit my website."

Respondent 7

"My first interest with art was at kindergarten, -I drew my house- something that I know and I like. I am not a creative person; I prefer to be the viewer rather than the creator, I like to view graphics, animations, and certain fine arts.

I visit exhibitions galleries museums sometimes, not often, only the big ones and when accessible and time allowed, I am not sure what culture means to me."

Respondent 8

"I have an artistic mind and nature but no artistic skills (my Mother was an artist). I have been involved in art at work over the years as I always take the opportunity to be responsible for displays.

In Tasmania I was actually the adviser and had a skilled artist who made my designs reality. With the advent of PCs and graphics I spend a lot of time doing displays, making birthday cards for a numerous family and for friends, and for 8 years I designed Theatre programmes and posters for an amateur dramatic group. I wrote a book (alas unpublished) and a chapter is devoted (more or less) to a visit to the National Gallery, incorporating my favourite paintings including one of Mary Magdalene and one of Jesus and Caphaius by candlelight.

I did art in my first two years at high school and love the history and theory. I wasn't allowed to continue it (shorthand was so much more useful!).

I also read biographies and novels about many painters.

I like:

Beautifully executed miniatures.

Landscapes

Moonlight

Water

Cats

Snow

Arthur Rackham

Ernest Shepherd

When I look at the paintings that appeal to me I find that light is always an integral part.

I have paintings on my walls, I look at art books, I take photographs. I have a sense of the rightness (my rightness) of how things are arranged. Added

value, something that can't be measured but enhances our lives and sometimes our relationships.”

Respondent 9

“I just enjoy looking at art and learning about it as representative of human preoccupations. Not really interested in technique.

I like all sorts except the Damien Hirst School of Let's Take The Piss I don't really enjoy abstract art either, except some Paul Klee. Always was (interested in art) first image I remember being really struck by was a Lowry when I was about 7. I grew up in Salford and seeing one of his paintings elevated the mundane into something special. Then I fell for Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII when I was 10 and spent ages copying it in different materials.

The walls of my house are crammed with images I enjoy looking at for one reason or another. I also enjoy big glossy art books, food for the eyes and the soul.

Absolutely definitely art can be for everybody. The Angel did wonders for people's interest in art and it would be really interesting to know what kind of repercussions the initial debate had in the lives of people who had never previously had a spark of interest in the subject.

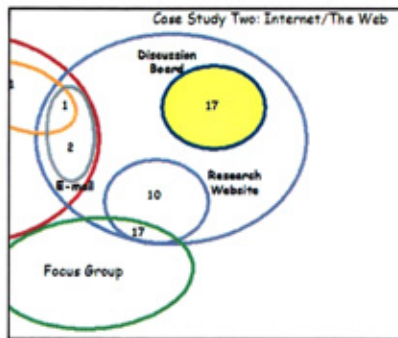
Blimy! Hard to put it [Culture] in a nutshell, but I believe that anything that lifts us out of mere unthinking existence to notice beauty, symbolism, significance, the nature and resonance of our lives signifies culture.”

Respondent 10

“I looked for art because I'm a painter too and I like to study other artists work I was looking for examples of the work of William Scott, who is one of the St. Ives artists and painting and sculpture, representational and abstract the topics are various. Study and research to help me with my own work

Google is a superb search engine. (type in my name, for example, and note that it finds my pages on the breaking art site), Gallery websites, Art Magazine websites, Amazon for art books. The first time I used the PC to look for visual art was 1988 its usually at home, alone."

7.4.1 Discussion Boards



Seventeen respondents participated in discussion using the research website, FreePint, Yahoo and Cumbria discussion boards.

The vignettes demonstrate each respondent's participation either in response to a direct question or picking up on a discussion offering

insight to the individual's thoughts on visual art and DVA.



Cumbria Bulletin Board

"Art can be anything these days - such as a messy bedroom! it's ridiculous, and makes true artists look bad!"



Free Pint Message Board

"Re: Using PCs to view Visual Art I wrote the creative technology part of a web site for a while. The pages have not been updated for about a year but many of the links are still active. Go to <http://www.elpub.org/base>"

Re -Re: Using PCs to view Visual Art Heather, I use my Mac to view art everyday. I am working through <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/> one or two paintings a day, I use Google images to search whatever artist strikes my fancy.

Re Re Re: Using PCs to view Visual Art Heather, I'm not quite sure of the context in which you're asking the question, but I use the Internet to find out about art and artists. I also have some of my own work posted on a couple of websites.

Re Re Re Re: Using PCs to view Visual Art There are some superb sites on the Internet both UK (usually university based) and overseas. Museums of Russia is one particularly of note. The 2 downsides I have found is that a slow home connection can mean one picture takes ages to download, and that some collections are only available to subscribers usually registered students of a college or those whose college has paid a licence for access to another's database. Many modern artists have their own web pages full of images of their work, and there are at least two subscriber groups for artists who are able to put samples of their work on a collective database. There is much to be found if you are good at searching.....

Re Re Re Re Re: Using PCs to view Visual Art I've tried looking at art on the web a couple of times but find it is nowhere near as good as seeing it in the flesh. I have seen some good art designed specifically for the net but couldn't tell you what that is offhand. Art in the community is very important; we should have lots of it! Of course hospitals & schools should come first but we need art that is readily accessible, for example I love the Angel of the North. We have some really great art in the shopping areas here in Sheffield, eg a poem carved into a pedestrianised street."



Yahoo Message Board

"Discussion: What do you think?

On the Web I would like to discuss with people who use computers either at home or in public spaces to look at visual art. Why use this technology and media to view? Does this replace traditional viewing of art? Are there some art forms that are particularly suited to this media? In the Community

How do you feel about art in your community? Does it affect your life? Is it important to you? Does it make a difference?

Look forward to a good discussion

art27uk

Art in the Community on the Web

Msg: 2 of 3

All art, be it via modem or museum, is inspirational. I use the computer to link me to places and art I could not view in person. It also creates availability to those that would never seek art in a traditional way. I also find that by viewing art on here, I become inspired on a daily basis. Something that is soon lost from daily hum-drum!

In the community: Art is an everyday thing for me, I find art in everything. So yes I do feel it is important. Art can make people stop and reflect, even if it is only for a second. The human mind can do a lot in a second. ;) Redsy

Re: Art in the Community on the Web

Msg: 3 of 3

Hi, I agree so much with everything Redsy said that I have no more words to add. I love looking at other's art sites on the web and appreciate other artists looking at mine and leaving me a message. I don't get out to many real time galleries
Jo."



Research Web Site: Value of Art Message Board

"Title: a 21st Century thing

Name: Anonymous

Message: maybe art on the Internet should not be considered in terms of a tangible you know paint and canvas but something that is relevant to the 21st century a challenge a new term for a new century

Title: Re: Mona Lisa - the visit

Name: Anonymous

Message: Hi, I recently 'visited' the Mona Lisa - what a disappointment (not the subject, more the tourists!) I could not get within 10 yards, so unless I'm more interested in telling the folks at home, I would have got more from viewing it on the web. - great experience being there, but I must question the point of visiting in person??

Title: Re: virtual jackdaws

Name: Anonymous

Message: Alan Fletcher in the intro to his book "the art of looking sideways" describes himself as more of a 'visual jackdaw than a compulsive collector'

Is that not what we all can be on the Internet? You can pick & choose, dip in and out, return time and again to favourite sites, take things to keep e.g. copies of images its the whole experience the picture the control the keepsake

Title: re re mona lisa

Name: Anonymous

Message: My message the surroundings certainly do not enhance the visit to the Mona Lisa, you are channelled into a room, people run to get there, jostle and push, no possibility of passing by, only a view from a distance over the heads of many, the extremely high level of noise distracts and becomes intense, give me the Mona Lisa on my pc an un-interrupted view no heads or video camera's in the way, to view at my leisure my pace with my choice of sounds, and should I need more information or another work I'm on-line already!

Title: thoughts on space

Name: Anonymous

Message: My message wondering ...does it make any difference what space the paintings/images are hung? In the art world I imagine they say it does, but have we moved on from there...does the virtual space offer an alternative??

Title: Re: Re: my favourite painting

Name: Anonymous

Message: I agree with what is said on your message board regards viewing (or trying to view) the Mona Lisa. But forget Leonardo's masterpiece if you will. Visiting the Louvre was always an opportunity for me, anyway, to see my favourite painting: "Rembrandt's Bathsheba with King David's letter." A great great painting.

Title: Re my favourite painting

Name: Anonymous

Message: My message Hi I have to agree that Rembrandt's Bathsheba is outstanding...and impressive to see in the Louvre but just to refresh my memory before I replied I thought I would take a look and see if it was online and it is the relationship and proximity of the canvas may be removed but the beauty, detail and narrative that lies within the painting remains. The quality of the image is rather good. I looked the painting up at

<http://www.abcgallery.com/R/rembrandt/rembrandt40.html>

Title: Re: Re: Re favourite painting

Name: Anonymous

Message: My message Is there the same enjoyment viewing your favourite painting on screen. I think not. Surely you have lost the vibrancy that comes from the canvas.

Title: thoughts on viewing art on the net

Name: Anonymous

Message: I agree with you a painting like Rembrandt's Bathsheba can be viewed to pretty good effect on the net. Unlike, say, Vermeer's "Girl with a pearl earring," which has to be seen in the flesh, as it were, in order for the viewer to appreciate the beauty etc of Vermeer's truly outstanding Masterpiece."

The nature of the Web (and therefore discussion boards) determines that it operates through use. The voices from the Case Study Two site simultaneously make themselves (and their activity) known and anonymous through their use of the web (Burnett and Marshall, 2003).

7.5: Summary

The decision not to collect demographic or personal data from each respondent has permitted the 'essence' of the individual to emerge allowing their voices to be heard and in doing so firmly place the emphasis of this research on the individual. What has been demonstrated here through the respondents' voices is a sense of each respondent and an insight to the empowering nature of *new space*.

7.6: References

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Chapter 8: Discussion of Findings

"You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way" (Lessing, 1962).

8.1: Introduction

The emphasis placed on **the individual** through the government's commitment to the development of a Learning Society and within that to establish a culture of lifelong learning, **the potential** of DVA resources in creating an opportunity for informal learning thus contributing to a further distinction of the quality of the individual's experience within their own community and the seeking of an understanding of **value** as attributed by the individual suggested the need for this research.

The research presented two case studies to demonstrate within this wider concept of the Learning Society an understanding of the value to the individual of access to DVA in *new space*. The framework of three aims and eleven objectives guided the focus of the research and identified elements and themes inherent within the concept of *new space*, value, learning and the use of DVA.

8.1.1: Learning

The ethos of lifelong learning places an increasing emphasis on the individual and offers the potential for empowerment and provision of more choice and opportunity (Edwards et al, 1998). Lifelong learning can be determined as fundamental to 'human growth' as a continuing aspect of everyday life, when it is considered in holistic terms of the individual's [everyday] experiences i.e. health, transport, environment, communication, arts, culture and family (Fryer, 1997, 1999; Parkin, 2004). Therefore lifelong learning can be regarded as a continual process of experience and encounter in an individual's everyday activity within their world, their own community. This experiential process of **life long** learning has, as Parkin (2004) observes in principle no barriers as

there is familiarity with everyday life and informality with “*no grades to pass or boxes to tick*” (Parkin, 2004, p8-9).

Offering enhanced opportunities of access to shared DVA resources at community level have the potential to add a further distinction to the quality of an individual's experience in the provision of more choice and opportunity in familiar spaces, empowering the individual to become a user of such resources through experience and encounter.

8.1.2: DVA

The role of ICTs in offering *new space* and access to such shared resources is enabled not only by the considerable advances in technology and digital media but also the Government's commitment to facilitate the learning society through the use of ICTs providing infrastructure, networks and community spaces. It was in the public library community space that the concept of *new space* developed during the research. In Phase I, for the period of initial observation the relationship between the two distinct components of *new space*, the *physical* and the *virtual*, were identified. Parkin's (2004) observation of no barriers to learning because of *familiarity* and *informality* were identified within this research as particular characteristics of the relationship between the *physical* and the *virtual*, in that the user is in a physical space of choice known to them, their own home, work place or community space e.g. the library. In accepting the physical space within those boundaries of their everyday life the *virtual* space when introduced becomes part of that familiar context. It is the realisation of *new space* and media in these terms and the ability for art to enter the world of the individual that can empower individuals to become users of DVA (Robson and Dixon, 2001). The use of art in these ‘familiar’ spaces becomes readily apparent in the consideration of the learning and social function of art. The findings from this theme are discussed later in this Chapter (8.2.1.2) and in particular the immediacy of meaning and opportunity when art is ‘used’ in a familiar space in

an everyday context. Acknowledging art as an everyday thing demands that it [art] is inherent in these 'familiar' spaces both in the physical and virtual space. The following extracts from participants in both Case Study sites identify that inherent nature and provide a rationale for the consideration of art as an everyday thing.

Virtual

- "Stuff like FFF and gene art makes art very **immediate** and **accessible** for short periods. Art shouldn't have to be an everyday thing, but it's probably a **good thing if some of it is.**"
- [Daily] **Stimulation** of the eye and **cognitive** thought, **imagination** and **inspiration.**
- No longer **elitist**
- Puts things into **new contexts**
- **Messages, meanings**, thought provoking, awareness

Physical

- "**Everyday** someone somewhere is working on a new piece of art"
- "Pictures on the wall, **food** for the **eyes** and **soul**"
- **Consciously** [everyday] look at the **physical** urban **landscape** of **Gateshead**
- "Even the way I put together my **clothes** a **form of art**"

(Researcher's Emphasis)

8.1.3: Value

As identified earlier through the study of the discourse and literature surrounding value the research established that value resides uniquely within each individual, and is attributed by the individual in specific context. The personal meaning derived from the access and use, the context in which use and access to DVA occur and how those results are integrated into the individual's everyday life, were considered crucial elements in the individual's construction of value.

Exploring the DVA information seeking process, context, mode of access and the utility of DVA information permitted, therefore, an insight into value as constructed and understood by each individual of his or her own experience (Dent, 1995; Badenoch et al, 1994). This study of the individual's value, enabled the research to consider a general community value (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). This was particularly important as the regeneration or development of a community is largely dependent on the members of that community and without their own individual development, growth and engagement there is limited success in creating self-sustaining communities (CCC, 2005; Cullen et al, 1999; DCMS, 1999; DfES, 2001).

In what terms should value be discussed? and How can this evidence of a valuable experience be identified? These questions can only be considered in the context of the experience as a whole, what follows in this Chapter is a discussion of that experience structured around the three research aims. Essentially the research was designed to answer two questions, namely:

1. *Is there a value to the Individual in accessing DVA in a community space?*
2. *What is value as understood by the Individual?*

In order to answer these questions the research needed to place firmly the individual at the centre of the research and explore the philosophy of value, the social and economic development of value theories, systems and beliefs that undoubtedly have influenced the concepts of value thinking today. Through this exploration the crucial elements of the individual's value construction were identified and are discussed in detail under 8.2.3.3.

To support the discussion of the findings and conclusions, the key findings are presented here within the framework of the research's three aims, *Lifelong Learning, ICTs and new space, Use, Access and Personal Meaning* and

corresponds to the layout and presentation of the data analysis results in Chapter 6. This framework allowed the researcher to respond to each aim and objective, consider the theoretical implications of the interpretations and to articulate the questions that grow out of these considerations, pointing the way for further discussion.

8.2: Discussion: Findings and Conclusions

8.2.1: Research Aim One

Explore the relationship between the provision of access to **DVA** and the **ethos of lifelong learning**.

8.2.1.1: The Learning Process

Active engagement with experience, i.e. the individual engaging with DVA in *new space* can result in 'learning elements' (*Resource*: 2001) which add a further distinction to the quality of the individual's experience and contribute to their own construction of value.

This experience enables individuals to consider themselves not only in a conventional framework of social norms i.e. material, vocational and family but also in intrinsic terms of self, social identity and personal meaning (Cullen et al, 2000). This establishes learning as having a wider context in the learning society as a process, wherein the 'learning elements' therefore contribute to

"an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values, feelings, attitudes and capacity to reflect" (*Resource*, 2003, p8).

Based on an understanding of the characteristics as identified by Lieb, (1991), Ewell, (1997) and Beattie, (2002) and discussed in Chapter 6 (6.4.1.1), learning elements were identified across both case studies and the focus group (Figure XXVI). In the context of this research the 'learning elements' were expressed in terms of *Experience, Opportunity, Participation* and *Resources*. Within these broader terms characteristics of attitudes, skills,

feelings, creativity and issues of access were evident. In the responses from the Case Study Two respondent's the analysis identified language and characteristics of a more positive, empowering and ambitious nature for example terms such as human *creativity*, *to be expressive*, *success* were used. This positive sense may be associated with the frequency in which the individuals participate within *new space* and the activity in the seeking and use of DVA and therefore an increased familiarity and confidence in both. Responses from Case Study One respondent's identified *participation* in terms of a social or collaborative activity or with the support of peers or family and this can be correlated to the physical spaces in which the DVA activity occurred primarily in the home.

Experience, identified with the activity or ability for reflection through this particular experience, a sense of understanding, awareness of [human] creativity and pleasure. **Opportunity** was primarily in terms of time being able to access such resources 24 hours a day. But also in terms of a broadening of interests and horizons and in the presentation of the opportunity to be informed an aspect of current awareness. **Participation** was discussed in terms of freedom, freedom to research, follow up any curiosity, communicate and collaborate. This is closely linked to opportunity and access. **Resources** were recognised by their diverse nature, the potential of the medium and the global nature of the Web.

These elements and characteristics correspond to the ethos of the Learning Society and lifelong learning in that they embody opportunity and choice, placing the emphasis on the individual [learner] through experience. The desire to motivate, make choices and attainment of skills supports the ethos of a continuous learning process. Responding to changes in society and working life can further extend the learning process to the home, libraries, public and community spaces; the provision of DVA resources is one facet of this extended learning process.

Learning elements were also identified in the research through the use of the Respondents' emotive language making specific reference to personal meaning. Respondents expressed this in such terms as '*their potential as people*' or in expressions of happiness, of '*becoming happier*'. The viewing of DVA in *new space* presents the individual with the opportunity to think and develop personal feelings, outside a formal education structure (Brookfield, 1983).

In considering this emotive language in terms of value, *becoming happier* i.e. happiness can be determined as a cluster of values (Kuperman, 1995) associated with the concept of self and self-esteem that is the nature of feeling good. The individual influenced by the 'feel good factor' (Badenoch et al., 1994) makes a subconscious evaluation of the experience of viewing DVA and the resultant satisfaction or contentment derived. In many cases the satisfaction was articulated by the opportunity of freedom and choice to explore the DVA resources, which acted as a driver for the development of personal 'thoughts and feelings' (Riukas, 1998).

As the quotations below demonstrate this freedom and choice was demonstrated by respondents in taking time out from a daily activity such as work, shopping or study and accessing a DVA resource either by searching for specific content or by just browsing:

"I might be out shopping and will pop into [Branch library] for half an hour and look for a favourite subject, not necessarily a direct trip to the library to use the PCs." (Respondent, 4 Case Study One).

"The main reason for [me] to look for art on the Internet is fascination, finding out, enjoyment, to utilise." (Respondent, 1 Case Study Two).

"I do this [search for DVA] at home alone at least once a week. This has developed from a life long interest, which has turned into an academic path and into a business." (Respondent, 5 Case Study Two)

Actively engaging in the experience through the action of searching, gaining access and viewing DVA is identified primarily as having a beneficial, positive, life-enhancing effect upon the individual, however such an experience may also initiate an effect of little benefit. This experience and its resultant effect upon the individual will be congruous within itself. Therefore both positive experiences and experiences of little benefit were recognised as equally relevant to the individual as part of the learning process. Nietzsche (1844-1900) determined that both negative and positive values are required for the 'flourishing of human existence', therefore if value and lifelong learning is to be understood in the perspective of everyday life both the positive and negative aspects the learning process and ultimately value must be acknowledged (Nietzsche in Schast, 1995). In that an individual can be empowered to express their own opinion, even if that opinion is a negative view, they are actively engaging in a discourse, in this context around visual art. To illustrate this point, participation in an online discussion requires the participants to be pro-active i.e. seek out access to and engage in discussion, responses such as

"Art can be anything these days - such as a messy bedroom! It's ridiculous and makes true artists look bad!" (Cumbria Discussion Board, 2002)

has enabled this respondent to become a user (of the discussion board) and participant in the discussion, engaging in an active process. This engagement is not limited to discussion boards, but every time an individual searches for DVA they are making a considered choice not only in terms of the visual art but also through the choice of search engine, web site and physical space, as indicated in the following Respondents' extracts.

"The last search I carried out using the Copernic and Google search engines, I also receive an email alert from the British Medical Journal every week and there was a link to story about Damian Hirst's new show called "Medicate". I then did a search on Google to see if there were more images or words on the net." (Respondent, 3 Case Study Two).

"All art, be it via modem or museum, is inspirational. I use the computer to link me to places and art I could not view in person. It also creates availability to those that would never seek art in a traditional way. I also find that by viewing art on here, I become inspired on a daily basis. Something that is soon lost from daily hum-drum!" (Message 2, Yahoo Discussion Board, 2002).

The engagement with DVA created a learning experience that Respondents identified in their own terms as giving an '*extra layer of knowledge*' that was not necessarily vocationally or academically related but added '*a value to all aspects of their lives*'. This DVA activity incorporates two of Tight's (1996) key features of lifelong learning. Firstly that it goes beyond formal education providers, to include many differing community, agencies, groups and individuals in a learning activity in terms of the provision of resources both virtual and physical (8.2.2.1.1, 8.2.2.1.2), and second that individuals can be empowered to direct themselves in the lifelong learning process and identify the resultant value (Smith, 2001).

*"Enjoyment of art and history can improve an education experience. I was impressed with how **possible** it was to get affordable art. I enjoyed and was surprised that viewing art in this way could be **informative**."* (Respondent, 2 Focus Group). (Researcher's emphasis)

This self direction towards a lifelong learning process and an *extra layer of knowledge* is evident in the quotation above a new experience, in that experience the individual has identified that DVA offered a new form of information. This can also be identified by the inclusion of additional information or information an individual may not necessarily actively seek out for example a painter's biography.

*"I liked it because it gave me the chance to see paintings that I might not have had the chance to see 'live'. It was a bit like **going round the gallery with a headset as I also got information about the painter and the painting**."* (Respondent, 11 Focus Group) (Researcher's emphasis)

8.2.1.2: Visual Art, Learning and Social Function

Visual art as a source of social information and learning, offers an understanding of the world through images. During the research the theme '*art helps make sense of the world*' emerged from insights into the utility and purposes the respondents conferred on DVA.

Respondents suggested that visual art places 'things' into new contexts and stimulates thinking, escapism and expression about the immediate world they live in as demonstrated in the two extracts below.

"Off course it **helps in the processes of long life learning**. Art is a very important thing in life. Art puts things into **new contexts and therefore makes us think** about the world around us." (Focus Group, Respondent 16)

"also important as **forms of expression or comment** both by the artist and the person viewing them." (Respondent 3, Case Study One)

(Researcher's emphasis)

Gadamar's (1986) concern with the experience of art and its 'living relationship' between the viewer and the work, at the viewer's particular moment in time suggests a meaning or message that is still relevant.

Capturing visual art in an electronic format re-defines Gadamer's concept of a living relationship and, as DVA can be placed in any context and in any modified form the individual chooses, makes it the most immediate, meaningful and relevant experience for the individual. That meaning and relevancy was identified for example as an alternative to the gallery system, an opportunity to display [respondent's] own art work and a way to view human obsessions or concerns.

- "*a desire to source art outside the confines of the gallery circuit; to get away from the iceberg mentality of the gallery system.*" (Respondent 5, Case Study Two).
- "*I have my own website which has helped me enormously. By that I mean folks, regardless of where they are in the world, can view my*

paintings. I get approx 1000 hits a week.” (Respondent 6, Case Study Two).

- *“I just enjoy looking at art and learning about it as representative of human preoccupations. Not really interested in technique.” (Respondent 9, Case Study Two)*

A linkage from visual art as a source of understanding and learning can be made to the consideration of art as an everyday thing (Figure XXVIII). That is in the respondents' awareness of the many meanings and messages that images can portray and represent to that particular individual within their particular context. The quotations below from three respondents demonstrate a range and diversity that characterises DVA as an everyday thing.

- *“Patterns exist in everything including mathematical equations and physical laws.” (Respondent 2, Case Study One)*
- *“Stimulation of the eye and cognitive thought.” (Respondent 1 Case Study One)*
- *“Because it is not just art but history culture.” (Focus Group, Respondent 4).*

DVA can be demonstrated as a driver for learning, aiding sense-making and the ability to capture the imagination of the individual. Respondents identified during their engagement with DVA particular characteristics that related to this concept of sense-making, in that DVA was considered to be *challenging, uplifting, a confirmation of their [the respondents'] own sense of 'rightness'* in terms of how things should be in that particular world of the respondent. DVA was acknowledged as being an appropriate and accessible way to satisfy the need to visualise art and through this both knowledge and learning about almost *anything* could be achieved.

The diversity and versatility of DVA can support the initiation of leisure or informal learning. By looking at what individuals search for and view, the

diverse nature of DVA can be identified and hooks or drivers of interest can be further developed by providers or in the use of DVA resources to support learning activities.

8.2.1.3: What do those individuals using *new space* to access DVA look at?

There must always be the very first initial engagement with such resources. It was established that the initial discovery by respondents of art on the Web was prompted or driven by a need, to find specific information for a task or research. Many respondents had searched initially for images and art related information within the context of their own working practice for example

*"I do use it [Internet] quite a lot, I use it here [at work Shipley Art Gallery] I use it a lot searching for **exhibitions** and things particularly searching for when the **quilt** show started."* (Respondent, 5 Case study One).

*"I am a college Librarian ...mostly I look at paintings for specific reasons. Sometimes I look for **specific subjects to illustrate** something (**unicorn** for the unicorn catalogue!) **cats**, for varying reasons."* (Respondent, 1 Case Study Two).

*"I am a web author for a company intranet which involves **capture** and **creation** of **images** and an artist in leisure time."* (Respondent, 2 Case Study Two).

*"I like to view paintings, **figurative, landscape, abstract** - in **most media**. When I have found the material I contact the gallery or distributor to view. I rarely purchase over the Internet."* (Respondent, 5 Case Study Two).

(Researcher's Emphasis)

Within the context of the research DVA was identified from respondents comments (detailed in Chapter 6, Figure XXIX, 6.4.1.3.) as being in the form of a particular **object** that is the medium e.g. painting, sculpture, glass... and **subject** i.e. a particular artist, genre, and period. Primarily the object of choice most viewed and searched for was fine art, painting. Other forms included *pottery, photography, manuscripts, woodcarving, illustration, sculpture,*

ceramics, jewellery, installation and glass. The choice of subject matter was defined in the three categories of *artist, topic and movement*. The screen shots (Figure XXX) illustrate the DVA viewed within *new space* and in the literal sense these richly diverse DVA resources entered the world of the individual, making possible engagement with a part of their everyday life, to the extent that this becomes an integral element of their regular activities.

It can engage people in learning at all levels as a life process, by presenting the opportunity in home, work and community space and thus as a continual process of experience and encounter in an individual's everyday activity.

From the outset of fieldwork discussions with key informants in Case Study One identified the potential of the cross-over of visual art into learning. In initial meetings with key informants particular projects in Gateshead were identified as using the arts in learning, the regeneration of Saltwell Park (situated close to the Central Library), the Shipley Art Gallery extending its remit by inclusion in the Gateshead and Northern Grid for Learning creating an online centre in the Gallery.

This crossover was particularly evident in the art and health project 'Fine Fettle'. The function of visual art was identified as being a 'whole experience' used to communicate and relay messages to the community through their participation and engagement in art projects and not something that was merely delivered to the community in isolation. This function and utility of visual art was supported by thenortheast.com responding to community interest in the technology, i.e. the Web, by providing visual art content of a local nature. More recently the cross-over can be identified with the development of the *Imagine* and the *Well I Never Collection* providing online access to some of the region's museum and gallery collections.

8.2.1.4: Culture

In 2001 the report “Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years” set out the government's commitment to culture and creativity stating that “it matters” (DCMS, 2001). Three years on culture secretary Tessa Jowell (2004) opened the discussion again on the value of culture and creativity and the enrichment to individuals' lives.

Defining of the term culture was not set out in the initial research aims and objectives but emerged during the first stages of data collection and analysis. A key informant suggested that within the Gateshead Case Study individuals needed to have a common language for culture. The term was used for many cultural and arts activities and by individuals to express their participation, resulting in many meanings attributed to the term.

The propensity for the use of this term, at this particular time in Gateshead was increased with the bid for the Capital of Culture 2008 and the subsequent Culture¹⁰ programme.

In the development of a 10 year cultural strategy (2002 – 2012) Newcastle-Gateshead council defined for the region a meaning of ‘culture’. The key elements in this definition being that Culture:

- “is what gives meaning and value
- is everything we don't have to do to stay alive but need to feel alive
- is everything that enables people and communities to articulate what they believe and see as valuable or meaningful
- is diverse and controversial, inclusive and tolerant
- values diversity, cultures, identities and the interplay between” (GMBC, 2004). (Researcher's emphasis)

Central to this definition was that cultural or creative activity is identified as having an intrinsic value and positive outcomes ranging from economic and social development to health and education for the individual and community.

This acknowledgement by Newcastle-Gateshead of culture as a tool for regeneration and the underpinning philosophy as set out in the regional cultural strategy confirmed that it was essential this research explore and seek an understanding of the term. Therefore the decision was made to seek an understanding of culture as understood by individuals in the focus group and Case Study sites to identify what is meant when they used this word culture.

It became evident that individuals within the Gateshead community associated the concept of culture primarily with the physical environment and in particular the programme of new and regenerative building. This was not a surprising finding as the physical land developments leading up to and following the capital of culture bid was significant and apparent. The culture-led regeneration programme used cultural activity as a catalyst and driver for regeneration of deprived areas in particular Gateshead quayside (Evans and Shaw, 2004). This theme and the individual's understanding can be considered on three levels. The first level is the physical manifestation of the term, in the buildings representing the visual changes in the individual's immediate physical environment. The second identifies heritage as referring to the past in order to understand the present. The third level identified the words used to relay the individual's feelings.

*"I moved here 7 years ago and **never imagined then things like the Baltic or the Sage.**"(Culture Quote).*

*"I have lived all over the place and think it's the most **wonderful** city especially **Grey Street and the Architecture.**" (Culture Quote).*

*"I like being **able** to walk along the quayside. Before there were **warehouses** there and you couldn't **enjoy** the Tyne." (Culture Quote).*

*The banks of the **river** were at one time **rather dull**. This **artwork** has **changed** the landscape* (Respondent 1, Case Study One).

(Researcher's emphasis)

The individual's perception of culture from this theme, levels of interpretation and the other 'culture' themes identified, corresponded to the basic needs of survival as defined in the Newcastle-Gateshead definition of the term, suggesting a shared understanding of an intangible concept to 'feel alive' rather than keep you alive.

These themes are displayed visually (Figure XXXIII) in a network view generated by the data analysis software [Atlas*TI] to aid understanding of this complex term that has a number of shared meanings. What emerges are shared elements of understanding which can be identified, in terms of *personal meaning, society, activity, services and physical environment*. Culture can be understood in relation to 'self' highlighted in yellow in the diagram and specific context (highlighted in blue) i.e. the physical environment and the individual's activity within (highlighted in red).

A term such as culture that has many understandings, uses and misuses makes difficult an understanding or definition of associated activities in the public domain (Ministry of Education Science and Culture Iceland, 2002). Jowell (2004), on behalf of the DCMS defines culture as art (i.e. a product of creative practice) in any form that makes a demand on the producer, creator and consumer. In the last 15 years culture and cultural have come to replace the terms art(s) (Evans and Shaw, 2004). Museums and galleries, cultural institutions serving the public are associated with the terms culture and heritage.

When culture is considered in anthropological terms it can be defined as having three important characteristics:

1. Culture is acquired by people.
2. A person acquires culture as a member of society.
3. Culture is a complex whole. (Tylor, 1924).

Culture is the way in which people live, interact, and co-operate together. Individuals justify these interactions through a system of beliefs, values and norms, which assist in the understanding of both their own culture and value construction. If the term culture can be defined as being acquired, as part of a community, and makes a demand on the consumer i.e. *as a need to feel alive* then the concept of 'the cultural in everyday life' can be acknowledged. By this acknowledgement the relationship between culture and creativity emerges. To consider a cultural activity is to identify a creative characteristic either in oneself or in another. This theme was also considered by respondents in the appreciation of 'human creativity' and opportunity to form opinions of visual art in a 'non-pressured' environment.

"It gives them the opportunity to form their own opinions in a non-pressured environment and they can look at a variety of material thus enhancing their knowledge of the art world." (Focus group, Respondent, 13)

"I am a professional mathematician and that is very close to art (creative urge and satisfaction), appreciation of human creativity, pleasure in images." (Respondent 2, Case Study Two)

"Without culture life is so dull. Art and music are lifeblood to me, and I'd not survive long without them." (Respondent 3, Case Study Two)

During analysis an unanticipated theme began to emerge, supporting this concept of the 'cultural in everyday life' and the current discourse surrounding creativity in education. Those individuals who were identified as using PCs on a daily basis to view DVA, had experienced some form of initial encounter; That is, their first or first recalled encounter of visual art, occurring between the ages of 3-16 years. Each individual continued into adult life to use and incorporate a visual experience in some format as a regular activity, in particular through the use of DVA. Encounters ranged from "*a visit to a gallery*", "*shown images in a book*", "*articles in the Sunday colour supplements*" to "*the encouragement to draw as a child*" (Figure XXVII).

Discussion around creativity in education, as a tool in the enhancement and support of learning and learning itself as a creative process, suggests that introducing a cultural or creative element in the early stage of an individual's life can be a catalyst for future and continued cultural or creative engagement (McNaught, 2003). For an individual to achieve their full potential, collaborate and work effectively, creativity and cultural activity is vital (BECTA, 2004). BECTA (2004) determine that creativity is a common human attribute and that ICTs offer enhanced opportunities for creativity and in so doing establish an environment for motivation, confidence and pride in the individuals' own achievements (BECTA, 2004).

This cycle, the encounter in the early years associated with the individual's initial interest, which is primarily visual art, has a direct relationship to the activity i.e. the utility the individual applies to DVA and its employment as an integral part of the individual's everyday activity.

8.2.2: Research Aim Two

Explore the role of ICTs in offering a *new space* to the individual and visual art within the community.

8.2.2.1: ICTs and *new space*

The research took a purely user centred approach, therefore the understanding of *new space* in Case Study sites One and Two was explored through the perspective of the user. Insight into provision and access by the providers both physical and virtual came from prolonged observation, discussion with key informants, local government policy and strategy documents within the public domain. DVA resources appear to be an integral part of the ever-growing network. Identified through recognition of the local and regional cultural strategies, is the commitment of the DCMS working with MLA in making as a priority learning access and widening participation.

8.2.2.1.1: Providers: Physical Space

The concept of *new space* emerged in the first phase of the research, comprising of two distinct components the *physical* (the home, library, work, gallery, community centre) and the *virtual* (the world wide web or network environment) where visual art resources are held and made available as a shared resource. This physical and virtual space and the inter-relationships that exist between them produced a **different** space that was evidently **unique** to each individual.

Libraries have traditionally been inviting and comfortable spaces where individuals feel welcome, where the library services can meet their reading, learning, information and leisure needs providing the opportunity for community interaction. Libraries are identified as being at the heart of the communities they serve, providing the widest possible access to a range of services and resources (LA, 1997). They are recognised in the public identity of the community, providing access to those who otherwise may not develop the use of new resources (Das, 2000). For some the library offers the only point of access to cultural or creative activities. As a community space and

service individuals can feel enabled to inter-act at varying levels with others inside the library space.

The report 'Building on success an action plan for public libraries' (Resource, 2001) emphasised the role of libraries in issues such as regeneration, social inclusion and the delivery of the Government's objective to have all services deliverable online by 2005. Prior to this report 'Empowering the Learning Community' identified the library as central to lifelong learning and often the first point of contact "*to the information world and personal development*" (LIC, 2000).

Discussed in detail in the Case Study report, at the time of data collection in Phase I culture and visual art were high on the Gateshead agenda and in the public domain. This articulation was the combination of Gateshead's history of a public art programme, the Government's commitment to the role of culture and creativity with their encouragement of local authorities in the production of a cultural strategy that would incorporate the cultural sector in the broadest sense, i.e. arts, libraries, museums, heritage, tourism parks and sport, and the Gateshead and Newcastle joint bid for the Capital of Culture 2008. Gateshead Arts and Libraries service were key partners in this process as facilitators in consultation meetings and in their programme and vision of visual art and creativity. Therefore the researcher's expectation of use in the library space was high.

Once the researcher entered the library space and began prolonged observation the use and relationships within that space began to emerge. The inter-relationships between the space-people-art remained independent of the location of the physical space, i.e. the individual determining which physical space they occupied, indicating at an early stage that this very nature of *new space* would necessitate data collection to occur elsewhere. A number of relationships were identified, space-people-art, people-art, people-people. It was while observing individuals in the library space that this concept was

realised. The individuals being observed at this point were using the *virtual* space but not all were accessing DVA resources.

In the *physical* space the individual was primarily on their own, they would become anchored by the screen, with the shared experience of being a Web user permitting a familiarity within the *physical* space between those individuals present. A dance like interaction occurred between the screen, the *physical* space and the individual. While facing the screen, involved in their own activity, some individuals would periodically turn and move into the *physical* space and interact with their neighbours. This interaction could take the form merely of a comment or shout, to expressing a frustration with the process or sharing their screen experience with their immediate neighbours.

In this way *new space* offers an opportunity for communication not only in the technological sense, i.e. email or discussion groups, but in the creation of an environment of a shared experience. *new space* can offer, as discussed in the introduction to the research, the opportunity for the regeneration of the public sphere. It can be viewed as a common space to initiate discussion based upon a shared experience and hence a milieu of familiarity through the use of the PC and beyond the screen i.e. the resources, the results, a need for help, to share a find or an apprehension.

What emerged was a differing perception and understanding on the part of the researcher, user and library, of the potential of DVA resources and *new space*. With regard to *new space* this misunderstanding was realised at an early stage in the research process when the key informants were unable to fulfil their perceived role. They could only point to the users of the new space without an understanding of the purpose, content or subsequent use. It is acknowledged that this was due in part to user privacy. It became apparent that many users of the library did not know about DVA resources and that the library or the Shipley Art Gallery could be used to view them. Observation in the Shipley Art Gallery online centre discovered that the space was not used

to its full potential. The ICT Issues Learning and Culture Group (Gateshead Arts and Libraries Service, Library plan 1998-2001) were committed in their support of the ICT developments at the Shipley Art Gallery its aim being towards the creation of a Lifelong Learning Centre. The gallery space was used for email or ICT courses with no obvious connection to the gallery or the collection. Gallery education staff were limited in the use of the facility as part of their role. Unfortunately one year on from its creation the online centre in the gallery was withdrawn due to this lack of use and funding.

8.2.2.1.2: Providers and Resources: Virtual Space

The discovery exercise established current provision of DVA resources identifying six types of DVA providers, *Government, Commercial, Private, Academic, Local Authority and Museum Service*.

There appeared to be no coherent strategy or allegiance amongst the range of providers identified, though it was acknowledged that some providers do collaborate or act as a gateway or entry point to other providers, for example the 24-Hour Museum. Describing itself as the UK's national virtual museum the 24-Hour Museum claims to offer a mix of dynamic content including daily arts, museum news, exhibition reviews online trails. The site promotes publicly funded UK museums, galleries and heritage sites seeking to develop new audiences for UK 'culture' however not all sites linked from the 24-Hour Museum site provide visual resources (24-Hour Museum, 2004). The nature of the Web makes it an insurmountable task to track or index effectively DVA sites which continue to grow at an exponential rate.

Public access providers such as the public library and their employees have an understanding of such resources within the context of their own service. Each within their own environment 'rate' or assess the resource in relation to their user profile. This is also dependent upon the awareness, knowledge and

ability of the staff who facilitate access to an electronic network. The commitment to widen participation and facilitate an inclusive learning society taking full advantage of the UK's collections and heritage should play a significant role in the provision and promotion of the use of such resources.

At the time of data collection Gateshead Libraries, Library Plan (1998-2001) was committed to the development of:

"visual art with a particular emphasis on contemporary art...collections of materials and artefacts relating to Gateshead's heritage and make arrangements for their study and enjoyment by individuals and groups".

(GMBC, Libraries Arts and Information Library Plan 1998 – 2001).

This has continued to develop within a strategic arts programme, and marginally with electronic resources. The objectives of the regional *ICT issues Learning and Culture Group* (Library Plan, 1998 - 2001) looked to:

"ensure that Gateshead-based content and applications developed in the borough are accessible world-wide." and "lead the development of other web sites, e.g. Gateshead Quays, Capital of Culture 2008, Gateshead Millennium Bridge...support ICT developments at the Shipley Gallery towards the creation of a Lifelong Learning Centre".

(GMBC, Libraries Arts and Information Library Plan 1998-2001).

To ensure that Gateshead based content is available world wide not only requires public access to the resource but assumes a level of current awareness on the part of the access provider (e.g. GMBC) and the user of such resources and their perceived potential. GMBC have maintained content of major projects such as the Angel of the North, Gateshead Quays project, the Millennium Bridge and Saltwell Park. Gateshead's vision and expertise presents a unique opportunity for the development of a true understanding of the potential of *new space* and subsequently its use and the intrinsic [DVA] resources. This potential and utility is yet to be fully realised by both the

providers of DVA, the users and the physical spaces. Whilst the Government and associated agencies are accepting the benefits of ICT skills, cultural and creative access and participation DVA in its many forms is waiting to be fully embraced.

8.2.2.2: Barriers

The research aims and objectives originally set out to identify the concept of access and the barriers encountered as perceived and understood by the individual and providers. It was considered this would be significant for the use of such resources. However in responding to the needs of the research i.e. in a purposive sample and the emergence of a new and distinct community a virtual community determined the redundancy of these particular issues. The purposive sample criteria established users who were already accessing and using DVA resources. As the research developed the focus onto the user access and barriers were to be understood from that perspective, the researcher gaining insight of the individuals' experience and not influenced by the providers' perception. However as discussed previously (8.2.2.1.2) what did emerge and can be considered as a barrier was a limited awareness of the potential of DVA resources and *new space* by providers. Through observation and discussion with key informants there was agreement that 'the arts' and culture had a significant role to play in learning however this consideration has not been fully developed in respect of DVA. The potential for provision and use in community spaces is not being realised to its full capacity. The encounter with DVA is potentially available to everyone but is not made explicit. If by its very definition culture is **needed to feel alive** then such resources need to be clearly signposted.

While this can be said of many resources it is apparent from the commitment at regional and national level that DVA resources are an integral part of the ICT network and infrastructure. Underpinned by government policy at regional and national level the providers of DVA resources have an increasingly

important and challenging role. Government priorities are learning, access and widening participation and the continual momentum of site creation, development and capability if facilitated can empower, inspire and motivate individuals to seek access and utilise such resources as tools for lifelong learning.

8.2.3: Research Aim Three

Provide insight into the **use** and **provision** of access to DVA within this *new space* and the **personal meaning** derived.

8.2.3.1: Use and Access

Consideration of visual art as an everyday thing, the frequency of the activity and the initial expression of interest in visual art have a direct relationship to the use of DVA by the individual. The purpose and utility the individual confers on DVA is distinct and unique to that individual. Each experience and choice of subject and/or object is dependent on the individual. Use and personal meaning are derived from the context in which the access occurs.

A number of themes were identified in the mode of access employed, *finding aids, supporting material and frequency of use*. All respondents used a search engine to search for the given DVA resource. This was supported by the use of journals, magazines and newsletters to maintain current awareness of subject specific DVA resources. Examples of the supporting material included a newsletter on medieval architecture (the Art Review journal) and Karnak, a web site, which allowed a search request to be posted (the Karnak site generates a list of possible sites to search which is updated on a daily basis). The ease with which browsers and search engines can be used and such pro-activity by the individual signifies empowerment as a user and a facilitator in the search and use of DVA resources.

The frequency of usage varied but was particularly frequent from the Case Study Two web users. Regular engagement in use of DVA at a daily or

weekly level enables the individual to become 'expert' or knowledgeable about their chosen resources in the content and ability to search. The acknowledgement of visual art as everyday thing becomes implicit and individuals with this perception identify a visual element throughout their activities and that their own place within their own reality, community, home, work is signified by the visual art available within.

new space is in the literal sense bringing DVA into the world of the individual, identified primarily as their home and place of work; making possible the engagement with a cultural and visual experience as part of their everyday life. To the extent that use of DVA becomes an integral part of their regular activities and that the quality of the individual's everyday experience would be diminished if this were not achievable.

Use and purpose articulated in the respondents' own terms included *"discovering art information"*, *"to enhance work"*, *"pure pleasure"*, *"home artwork"*, *"ideas to paint"*, *"to have a wonderful emptiness"*.

This notion of the visual as an everyday thing is further facilitated by the capabilities of the technology and demonstrated in the capturing of images to use as icons, posters, e-cards and wallpaper on the individual's PC desktop.

8.2.3.2: Motivation

Why do some individuals seek out DVA resources and participate as a regular activity? What motivates the individual to seek access to DVA within this *new space*?

In the context of this research motivation is understood to be feelings or the characteristics of an individual that drive that individual toward a particular goal or objective. A number of themes emerged that identified that drive or need to seek out DVA. The relationship between use, the subject and/or

object, the frequency that access occurs and again the individual's consideration of the purpose of DVA as an 'everyday activity' can reveal the motivation for use.

By looking at the network display in Appendix VII these feelings or characteristics can be identified in the relationship between *frequency*, *use* and *purpose*.

Motivation can be derived from a desire to access and encounter visual art outside the confines of a formal structure. The technology dispels boundaries and breaks those 'traditional art boundaries.' The ethos of lifelong learning, placing the emphasis on opportunity and potential empowerment is embodied in the nature of DVA, enabling users to visit (virtually) galleries to which they otherwise would be unable to travel, to take advantage of the opportunity of 24 hour access and follow up on curiosities purely because they are able to and to view work before they buy in their own un-challenged space.

This motivation for DVA experience and activity is not concerned with replacing one (gallery) experience with another (virtual) but offering the opportunity to engage in an alternate experience one that can be used to enhance the other.

8.2.3.3: Value

The underlying principle of this research was to interpret value as understood by the individual and suggest a meaningful framework in which value could be discussed. The research proposed that value resides uniquely within each individual and without beginning to understand value in those terms; provision of resources and performance indicators could not be truly effective. Value has been discussed here as a quality of an individual's experience rather than a conceptual formula.

Value is derived from the relationship between personal meaning, the DVA resource, the context in which access is achieved, i.e. primarily in the individuals home using a search engine and supporting information, and the integration of the results into the individual's everyday activity. The research did not expect to find one clear definitive reason as to why individuals seek out and view DVA. Assuming the position that each individual is unique, the why is a complex mix of *pleasure, work, study, information, and relaxation* to name some of the attributes.

An example of the why:

- *“**buying** ceramics I like.”* (Respondent 2, Case Study One).
- *“**research, curiosity** and a desire to **source art** To get away from the iceberg mentality of the gallery system.”* (Respondent 5, Case Study Two)
- *“to **trace information** about **artists**, to find paintings about particular subjects.”* (Respondent 1, Case Study Two).
- *“To **look** all over the **world** and at the same time **enabling** all sorts of new art forms.”* (Respondent 2, Case Study Two)

(Researcher's emphasis).

How access occurs, and in what context, is significant to each individual but also displays more common features. There is a shared understanding and use of finding aids and search engines and the individual is pro-active in sourcing additional information in journals and newsletters to aid the discovery process. Putting the search to use and integrating this into their life is clearly influenced by initial encounters with visual art at an early age prior to the use of DVA in adult life, which influences the perception of this activity and visual art as an 'everyday thing' is a way of making sense of their reality (Figure XXVII, Appendix V and VI).

The experience of access to and use of DVA holds a unique (*subjective*) value to the individual because of the personal meaning they attach to that

experience. This can be identified as an **objective truth**, even though it holds a special significance only to that individual. For the very reason that the value is influenced by the experience within the context in which access has taken place, the individual displays in some form evidence of a *valuable experience* providing proof a verifiable fact that they receive or apply an *element of value* to the experience (Bell, 1914, Budd, 1995, Dent, 1995, Feeney & Grieves, 1994, Lewis, 1946, Raven, 1977).

How can this evidence of a valuable experience be identified? The theme of an initial encounter emerging from the research is linked to personal meaning, choice and relationships. Individual respondents associated the **encounter with a particular individual in their life** (identified in bold text in the respondent extracts below) who presented an opportunity for a new experience (the object or focus of that new experience is identified in **red bold** text in the respondent extracts below) and the empowerment to make choices as part of that experience. The activity of choosing included *choice of images, exhibition, selecting images for a scrap book*. Presentation of the experience not only involved visiting a community space but also occurred in the home by the *display of images as decoration, in books, as a creative activity*. Personal meaning is derived and associated with the relationship between the individual and the facilitator of the experience. This association is carried into adult life, and as one respondent described as "a window with a view that sparked and fuelled my interest in art" (Respondent 1, Case Study One).

Can you remember when you first realised your interest in art?

"about 3 or 4 , my **mum** took me often to Glasgow Art Galleries and Museum."

"Always was. First image I remember being really struck by was a **Lowry** when I was about 7."

"My **parents** let us choose our own pictures from a very early age my mother had several books with pages that she allowed us to frame. The first picture I remember spending my own money on was a Keene about age 9."

"I grew up in Salford and seeing one of his paintings elevated the mundane into something special. Then I fell for **Holbein's** portrait of Henry VIII when I was 10 and spent ages copying it in different materials."

"I was involved in music from earliest age, mainly singing. Art was there too. First interest probably in book illustration (4 years?) and **church architecture** (9-10?). I wasn't a good artist. More interested in writing."

"I became aware of art as a very young child as my **mother** studied fine art at Sunderland University before she married. Our home was filled with artwork, from my mother's own work to prints and books about other artists. This provided me with a window, a view that sparked and fuelled my interest in art."

The element of choice embodied in DVA resources presents few boundaries in offering potential access to view any image imaginable. In terms of culture DVA can be determined as having a material dimension as a resource and a value as a shared experience (DCMS, 2001), thus adding a further distinction to the quality of an individual's experience.

In the context of this research value is considered in terms of personal meaning through relationships and their association with the experience and the freedom of choice and the individual in the active engagement of the experience.

Benjamin's warning *"that the illiterates of the future will be not those who cannot read but those who cannot read images"* (Benjamin, 1935, in Pacey, 1983 p234), points to visual communication which is a vast and visible world for providers and users, with images entering every aspect of life but which is increasingly technology dependent and as Pacey (1983) foresees creates a one way process of *"image production"* (Pacey, 1983 p. 234).), which empowers the individual as user in exercising choice.

It is those individuals who engage and 'use' DVA as an everyday activity who can read and communicate visually.

8.3: Summary

Lifelong learning is a process and not a product (MLA, 2003), focussing on the individual their development, growth and personal meaning, enabling the individual to consider themselves. DVA resources can enrich this process and have the potential for personal meaning and sense making as demonstrated by individuals in this research. *New space* is key to empowering the individual in their own spaces i.e. home, community or work and can facilitate the engagement in the lifelong learning process. The continued development of the network infrastructure can be maximised to harness this resource, which is literally at the people's fingertips.

The commitment of local authorities such as Gateshead who have recognised the potential of visual art and culture and have identified the benefits of active participation are well placed to advance and maximise the use of DVA. This study is a step towards the consideration of DVA resources as a means to foster a culture of lifelong learning and enhance everyday life by maximising the use of *physical* (community) and *virtual* (electronic) space – *new space*.

One of the most powerful characteristics of *new space* is the ability to experience and share the vast and diverse DVA resource. An electronic hypertext document was therefore developed and created in the spirit of *new space* to facilitate a shared experience of the research as understood by the researcher and participants.

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Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1: Introduction

The primary focus of this research was the individual and their encounter with DVA. The research aims, established to guide the focus of the research maintained the emphasis on the individual and the potential of *new space* and DVA resources. In the fulfilment of these aims, three areas of new knowledge emerged, **value, new space and lifelong learning**. This led to an increased understanding of the empowering nature of the lifelong learning process and the enrichment of that process through the provision of access to and use of DVA resources and that *new space* is key to this provision of and engagement with DVA. The experience of active engagement with DVA offers the individual the opportunity for sense making and personal meaning; this has been identified as a unique value to the individual. Without an understanding of this value and in those terms, the potential of *new space* cannot be fully realised and the requirement and accepted use of best value performance indicators (Figure XXXIV) by public institutions such as libraries, museums galleries and archives can never be a truly effective measurement of the use and provision of such resources.

Information Provided:	Analysis
Discussion of methods relative to Best Value	<p>The Government has placed a duty of Best Value on all local authorities in the delivery of services by the most effective, economic, and efficient means available.</p> <p>Authorities are required to publish a performance plan and review every five years. Performance Indicators (PI), are used as the measure of a best value authorities performance in exercising a function. Targets are set against the PIs e.g. in Gateshead's library, Arts and Information Plan 1998-2001 <i>Computer terminals for public use per 100,000 population</i> Actual Performance 1998/99 = 12.57 Target 1999/00 = 22.62; <i>Number of RIS links created per week</i> Actual Performance 1998/99 = 10 Target 1999/00 = 15</p> <p>Best value is very much a statistical evaluation, key informants at the library perceived a difficulty in measuring the service or performance qualitatively.</p>
Best Value Report 2001	<p>Profiling GMBC and Library Service e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borough lies in upper quartile of local authorities in national Department of Environment Transport and Regions (DETR) index of deprivation; basic adult skills show 18.7% of adults have low literacy and 40% low numeracy. 33.5% Gateshead's population are active library members Core of the library service is the Central library <p>ICTs integrated into the service, many projects designed to widen access. Library users are reaping the benefits of GLAS's many years at the leading edge of IT-based library services.</p>

Figure XXXIV: Best Value: Extract from Figure XXI Information and Documentation Supplied by Key Informant Case Study One Site

This chapter presents a discussion of the new knowledge; *value, new space and lifelong learning*, a reflection on the practical method employed, its limitations and proposals for future research.

9.2: New Knowledge

The *new space* was explored holistically i.e. **both** the physical space and the virtual space, and in doing so the relationships that exist between these two spaces and the use of the resources within. Research and literature tend to focus on **either** the physical or the virtual space or discuss the relevance and potential of such spaces and resources at a strategic or policy level. For example the DCMS (2000) and Dodd and Sandell, (2001) have considered the physical spaces of libraries, museums and archives and their resources in terms of social responsibility. The report *New Directions in Social Policy: Communities and Inclusion Policy for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (2004), addresses the relevance of particular social policy to museums, libraries and archives and their perceived contribution to regeneration and a cohesive community identifying

“empowerment and engagement, a sense of place providing safe spaces, community cohesion, cultural awareness and routes to services” (Linley, 2004, p.13).

In doing so the report acknowledges the challenge

*“is to be able to capture... the **value** of and impact of museums, libraries and archives”* (Linley, 2004, p.13). (Researcher’s emphasis).

The report by Holden and Jones (2006) *Knowledge and Inspiration: The Democratic Face of Culture* also sets out evidence in making a case for the social contribution of museums, libraries and archives. The report discusses the use of such public institutions and their resources in terms of knowledge and inspiration, popularity and as a resource for society. This use is demonstrated in the report through data such as visitor numbers, accounts and evaluation of specific projects and the responses to a set of questions devised and posed to visitors. For example visitors were asked, “*what*

monetary value would you [the visitor] place on these services?" (Holden and Jones, 2006, p. 3). The report presents the evidence primarily in a statistical format,

"Tyne & Wear and Bristol Museums found that 81.4% of participants in museums projects felt inspired to be creative ...81% of teachers think it is likely or very likely pupils have learned more about other people and communities as a result of their visits to museums" (Holden and Jones, 2006, p. 7, p. 8).

The National Museum Directors Conference (2004) determined that museums and galleries had little to offer the real world and would look to a number of methods of engagement including media and technology to increase access to collections and lifelong learning experiences. Central to the *Campaign for Learning in Museums and Galleries* (No Date) ideas for democratising museums and the development of the public's role is to establish a two-way dialogue between the gallery or museum and the visitor. However in a speech to the Museum Association Conference David Lammy (2005) Minister for Culture identified that 63% of people in the UK are still not engaging with cultural and creative activity. In this speech Lammy suggested that ICTs and new media are key to this engagement and that offering access to collections in a digital format can be effective in widening access and empowering citizens. It is here that the potential of *new space* can be used to facilitate a connection and as the DCMS (2005) suggests the web

"holds the greatest potential and museums must look at ways of using its potential" (DCMS, 2005, p.7).

What is missing from such discussion and research is an understanding of the particular use, personal meaning and therefore value to each individual. A standard system of measurement for value in this context does not work and it is the consideration of and a rationale for a 'non-standard' means of capturing that understanding that this research has presented.

In the consideration of the contribution visual art can offer the individual in terms of opportunity for empowerment much research and literature has been focused on the use of museum and gallery spaces and their collections through school visits, project activity and practical participation (Arts Council England North West, 2005, Cook et al, 2002, DCMS, 2005, 2006, Scottish Museums Council, 2005, Tate, 2006) rather than the simple engagement with or the viewing of visual art by an individual and the personal meaning gained. This research has demonstrated that understanding of this contribution must come from the individual directly i.e. through an understanding of value as attributed by that individual.

As the discussion reflecting on the methods (9.3) employed in this study will demonstrate it was not always possible to directly observe the physical space and thus make those connections directly to the use of the virtual space and DVA resources. However what this research has provided is an opportunity to consider the potential of such resources, spaces, connections, relationships, and of course value.

9.2.1: Value

In the exploration of value and the writing of Chapter 3 the notion of self and the use of emotive language emerged, language that is not expressed readily and openly in an everyday context. As responses from participants were collected this emotive language materialised to reveal a personal meaning associated with the activity and demanding that such understanding could not be measured and therefore a more meaningful method must be developed to capture this experience.

In determining a method to identify and establish an understanding of value the theoretical framework of information studies was applied (3.8) to identify elements of value construction. In particular the theory set out in Badenoch et al, (1994) in which context is determined to be a significant factor in the value of information and that value is about the very personal meaning to each individual i.e. subjective, related and experiential in context. If, as identified in

8.2.3.3 value is considered in these terms then how can that construction of value be easily identified to support and further the provision of *new space* and DVA resources? If value is related to a utility from life experience and the individuals perspective then DVA resources and the *new space* in which they operate needs to be integral and embedded within the infrastructure of both the physical and virtual space and an understanding of the relevance and potential by all i.e. the users and in particular by the providers.

Value as a subjective and at times an intangible entity, must be captured in its richest form and as Bryson et al (2002) suggests institutions must move towards a richer understanding as they determine that

“the story is richer and often less clear than the apparent precision of statistical data. Managers must be prepared to use indicators that use “soft” as well as “hard” data” (Bryson et al, 2002, p.9).

In 1996 the discourse presented by Usherwood offered the view of a service provider who proposed

*“the need to focus on performance measurement which is **meaningful to the user (i.e. qualitative)** rather than convenient in Audit Commission terms”* (Usherwood, 1996 in Bryson et al, 2002, p. 9).
(Researcher’s Emphasis)

Usherwood continued to advocate for this richer understanding and acceptance of qualitative or soft data through a social audit methodology (Usherwood, 2002) however it is still considered that

“qualitative data does not have as much influence as quantitative data” (Usherwood, 2002, p.121).

This attitude and approach to qualitative data comes very often from the provider’s perspective and the need to meet performance indicators and targets. Ten years on from Usherwood’s discussion of a *measurement meaningful to the user* the Government are still setting best value performance indicators (BVPI) to measure, nationally, performance by public

institutions and services. These indicators of value do not reflect the actual elements that go into value construction, the personal meaning derived and understanding that characterises value. For 2004 – 2005 four BVPI's were set for Culture and Libraries

- BV117 Visits to libraries Number per capita
- BV170a Number of visits to/usage's of museums per 1,000 population
- BV170b Number of those visits in person per 1,000 population
- BV170c School pupil visits to museums & galleries

(<http://www.bvpi.gov.uk/>)

For 2006 – 2007 in Culture Services, Libraries and Museums only three BVPI's were set. However following a consultation process in 2005 the Audit Commission proposed changes for 2006 in the introduction of the *Culture Service Block* (Government Office North East, 2005). Both the DCMS and the Audit Commission hope that this amendment to performance assessment will

"establish a firm basis for the development of performance information for the cultural sector in local government"

(<http://www.culturesouthwest.org.uk/news/article.asp?ArticleID=163>)

This new assessment has been designed to cover:

"Libraries

1. levels of use of, and active participation in, public libraries
2. accessibility and ICT provision in libraries
3. service standards
4. satisfaction levels for libraries
5. management and levels of book stock
6. unit costs of library activities
7. funding levels (including levels for school library service)

Arts, Museums and Heritage

8. accreditation
9. levels of attendance and active participation in museums and arts events
10. electronic delivery of cultural services activities and use of IT resources

11. satisfaction levels for theatres and concert halls

12. levels of volunteering

13. level of involvement by targeted groups”

(<http://www.culturesouthwest.org.uk/news/article.asp?ArticleID=163>)

Whilst these amended assessment criteria (1, 9 and 10 in particular) go some way towards an understanding of the use of resources and services there remains a lack of a clear understanding and a need for advocacy for a qualitative performance analysis framework.

In response to the best value review and the consideration of a criteria based quality framework in measuring value Dixon, Pickard and Robson (2002) raised the question of value and the evidence collected and used by focussing on the Individual. In addition McClure stated that at the

“ local level it is well-known that anecdotal information and other types of human notice stories can be quite powerful in supporting the use of networked library services” (McClure, 2000, p. 37).

What must be done is to turn the anecdotal personal meaning into reliable evidence that is believable, trustworthy, worthy of being considered alongside other types of ‘hard’ statistical data and therefore worthy if not more worthy and which can be used to influence and inform the delivery and support of such services and resources (Dixon, Pickard and Robson, 2002).

The report by Holden and Jones (2006) considers cultural value in three constructs, intrinsic, instrumental and institutional within a framework of accountability and delivery to consumers and citizens and in terms of time and money expended. In these terms the instrumental value is defined as the wider social and economic value e.g. learning and regeneration. The institutional value is constructed by the way in which the public realm is built through such institutions.

The intrinsic value Holden and Jones (2006) consider to be a

“personal value of cultural experience to the individual” (Holden and Jones, 2006, p.12).

These three constructs are used to demonstrate how museums libraries and archives and their resources serve their customers. In the defining of the intrinsic value the report quotes Jowell (Secretary of State for Culture) asking

“Why do so many parents take their children to museums and galleries? She replies Because of the value of what this exposure to culture gives them for the rest of their lives” (Holden and Jones, 2006, p.13).

These yet to be discovered values referred to by Jowell (2006) are defined here as values of the sector and not intrinsically linked to the individual. In so doing the embedding into the individuals' life, experience and empowerment is not fully understood and therefore diminished in the relationship between the sector, services and resources. Reflecting back to the discussion in 2.7 research and discourse needs to place the emphasis on the individual, their experience and personal meaning, i.e. value in order to provide the most meaningful service, *new space* and resources possible.

9.2.2: *new space*

The concept of *new space* emerged very early in the research and permitted a discourse in the consideration of the provision of such public community spaces, virtual spaces and the use of a hidden space i.e. the individual's home. The potential of the community space lies in the notion of the public sphere; a common place to initiate discussion based on a shared understanding and in this context an un-threatening [DVA] resource.

This *new space* can seem commonplace; this type of space is encountered almost every day, e.g. a person in front of a PC screen, but nevertheless this commonplace phenomenon can hold considerable potential. If providers and

their staff employed in the delivery, are unaware of this potential of *new space* and DVA it will remain un-realised.

Observation of the physical space in Phase I of data collection (Figure XXXII) enabled the researcher to consider the activity of the user as they moved around the physical space (Gateshead Central Library), noting which PC they used, their interaction with their immediate fellow users and any comments or gestures made.

The relationships that were identified and developed (6.4.2.2) had one common factor, that they all occupied the same physical space. Familiarity and informality were identified within this research as particular characteristics of the relationship between the physical and the virtual space, in that the user was in a physical space of choice known to them, the library space, the physical space expanding later in the research to include their own home or work place. In accepting the physical space within those boundaries of their everyday life and spaces, the *virtual* space when introduced becomes part of that familiar context. Therefore the potential in terms of participation in such spaces is increased.

Towards the end of the research the physical space at Gateshead Central Library changed from the small fairly intimate setting of 8 PCs (as detailed in Figure XXXII) to a larger space with rows upon rows of PCs. Whilst this increases the availability of access the *dance*-like interaction observed between the screen, the *physical* space and the individual, becomes diminished. In this way the opportunity *new space* offers for communication not only in the technological sense, i.e. email or discussion groups, but in the creation of an environment of a shared experience becomes increasingly difficult and the potential of such spaces reduced. The perception and understanding of the potential of DVA resources and *new space* needs to be fully understood by the providers and embedded within their planning and service.

As it was identified in 8.2.2.1.2 there appeared to be no coherent strategy amongst the range of providers of DVA in the virtual space, though it was acknowledged that some providers do collaborate or act as a gateway or entry point to other providers.

Public access providers such as the public library, museum or archive and their employees have an understanding of their own institution's resources within the context of their own service provision. Each provider within their own operating environment 'evaluate' or assess the resource in relation to their particular user profile. This is also dependent upon the awareness, knowledge and ability of the staff who facilitate access to the resources and electronic networks.

The commitment to widen participation and facilitate an inclusive learning society taking full advantage of the UK's collections and heritage should play a significant role in the provision and promotion of the use of such resources. This potential and utility is yet to be fully realised by both the providers of DVA, the physical spaces and ultimately the users. Whilst the Government and associated agencies are accepting the benefits of ICT skills, cultural and creative activity, access and participation, DVA in its many forms is still waiting to be fully embraced.

At the outset of this research the virtual landscape of visual art was fairly new but steadily growing. Throughout the period of this research the virtual visual art landscape has grown and developed exponentially. As the analysis demonstrated (6.2.4.1, 6.4.1.3) the number and nature of visual art web sites and virtual collections are infinite. However the use of this landscape has not changed at the same rate; this rate of change can be considered in direct relation to the strategic approach taken by providers and the development of their service. It takes time for museums libraries and archives to harness and implement effective strategies for *new space* within their service

The ICT strategy for Scottish Museums (2004) identified the central role museums play as a knowledge base and the role of ICT in the engagement with their users. Significantly this strategy identified that as the first priority

*“Museums need to **know more about the people** who use electronic cultural resources, to **tailor projects to meet their needs**. They also need to identify non-users and understand why they do not use the resources that museums offer”* (Scottish Museum Council, 2004, p.14)
(Researcher’s Emphasis)

The ICT Development Strategy, for museums, libraries and archives in the South East of England 2004-2007 has identified a number of priorities including the provision of regional data relevant to ICT services in museums, libraries and archives to develop advocacy for the use of material and raise the profile of ICT in museums, libraries and archives (SEMLAC, 2004).

The Museum Documentation Association (MDA) is the lead organisation in the UK on documentation and information management for museums. In their response to the DCMS consultation paper *Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life* (2005) and in particular the question

“How can the sector ensure that the opportunities offered by ICT, electronic access and digitisation are fully utilised for the benefit of users and to reach out to non-users?” (Poole, 2005, p.9).

MDA called for a *proportionate* approach to the implementation of user-focused ICT systems and an

“evidence based policy for ICT in museums, and the provision of a clear cost-benefits case for the integration of technology into core business” (Poole, 2005, p.9).

While the MDA’s response is focused more clearly on the provider rather than the intrinsic benefit to the user the following extract taken from South West Museums and Archive Council Regional ICT Strategy 2004 – 2007

demonstrates the perceived relevance and potential of *new space* to their users.

“ 1. New types of service	ICT could enable MLA's to completely re-shape the services currently offered, for example delivering services to the home . For smaller and independent organisations however, simply providing access to collections would constitute a new service .
2. Fundamental organisational change	ICT allows organisations to operate in new ways , and to refocus resources away from traditional (and sometimes more mundane) activities, to more social, interpretive roles where individuals can add value through interpretation and personalisation of service delivery .
3. Using collections to tell new stories	ICT enables MLA's to create and exploit digital surrogates and to create digital stories around these surrogates. These stories could and should be told by users of resources and communities served by the cultural sector , as well as by the custodians of collections. Cultural organisations can move into the position of brokers of knowledge.
4. Providing contexts for collections	ICT allows organisations to tell stories by placing objects in context, by providing themed access and by linking to other types of media , e.g. oral history. Links between collections within and between the different cultural domains also becomes possible” (South West Museums and Archive Council, 2004, p. 17)

(Researcher's Emphasis)

What of that other *new space* home, which became particularly evident as the space of choice in this research? Development of DVA resources and the raising of their availability can increase use, the very nature of this [home] space being a personal space and the dynamic and potential for engagement within a family home environment is equally empowering and thus providers need to acknowledge this less visible space as indeed South West Museums and Archive Council have in the proposed new services and delivery to the home (1. *New types of service* above). This of course requires a deeper and richer understanding of the use and value of *new space* and DVA resources.

9.2.3: Lifelong Learning

“We need...to be able to **measure the value**, as well as the cost, of such work. Evaluating the impact of museum-based learning is difficult. Museum use is voluntary. **Learning is often informal, experiential and impacts on feelings and attitudes** rather than on the acquisition of concepts. (DCMS, 2006, p.9). (Researcher's Emphasis)

Throughout this discourse the potential of DVA has been articulated within the wider framework of learning and a learning society, DVA as a learning resource, a driver to engage in a learning activity.

Learning is a continuous process of encounter and by using DVA as part of that encounter the process can be enhanced. Through the engagement with DVA the experience, opportunity and participation can enable the development of skills, not only ICT skills and learning from the DVA itself but strategies for discovering information, a sense of creativity and thoughts and feeling all of which contribute to a **value** of the experience which embodies the ethos of lifelong learning (Hawkey, 2004).

This empowering of individual learners outside formal learning and education structures presents questions to those providers and deliverers of lifelong learning. Hawkey (2004) suggests that learning from museums using ICT technologies does not sit well within a formal learning structure, as he perceives that a **relationship** develops between the resource, technology and learner rather than a **collaboration**, from which the personal meaning to that individual emerges. Looking to the future Hawkey (2004) identifies the key to development of lifelong learning in such institutions is the

“personliasion of interpretation... release **untold potential**, as the individual learner is able to **use technologies to exercise choice** and to take **responsibility** for his/her **own** learning” (Hawkey, 2004, p.3). (Researcher's emphasis)

Banks and Allison (2005) recommend that funding for lifelong learning facilitated through ICTs should be based on the provision of

“flexible, informal and person-centered approaches that ensure staff work with people at their own pace and on their own issues” (Banks and Alison, 2005, p. 43).

The Museum, Libraries and Archives (North East) document *Communities Need Museums, Libraries and Archives* (2006) recognises that museums provide a non-threatening environment for lifelong learning and that libraries support learning activity in these informal places. Integrating DVA into these learning activities can further enhance this activity. This research has identified that engagement with DVA can make the learning experience more immediate and meaningful and within that particular context learning and DVA becomes a social function within *new space* (6.4.1.2, 8.2.1.2) and establishes Gadamer's (1986) idea of a “living relationship” between the individual, DVA and *new space*, thus making the meaning and messages work for that individual. This can be on a very small scale and not necessarily life changing but never the less important as part of the lifelong learning process.

DVA as a driver for sense-making establishes the potential for learning and the versatility and diverse nature of DVA can initiate that learning and by understanding what individuals are seeking out and viewing but most crucially **why**, can aid the further development of Cooper's (1993) hooks (2.3) to engage in the design and delivery of resources.

In light of the reduced, and in some particular cases withdrawal of funding for informal [lifelong] learning, it is vital that public institutions such as libraries and museums develop and make use of the spaces and resources to ensure that provision of adult learning responds to the needs of the individual at the local level (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2006).

9.3: Reflection on the Method

This research was originally concerned with access, access to resources, access to information and ultimately access to the research. If access to the sample in Case Study One, Gateshead had been achieved as initially intended then this would have been a very different research study exploring

the use of DVA in a Library community space, the barriers to access encountered and community influences on that access. The vision and foresight of GMBC (the original rationale for its selection as a case study site) continues to acknowledge the relevance and importance of the arts, culture and creativity in life and learning within the community. At the time of study the particular 'cultural climate' suggested the possibility of a heightened awareness of visual art by individuals in the community and the researcher's expectations in reaching the sample. However, the sampling methods and the first case study site did not reveal the sample. The nature of *new space* determined that data collection would not occur as anticipated. This required a reconsideration of the research; should the researcher stop there and focus on the non-use of *new space* and DVA resources in that community or try to engage the sample by other means? The decision to continue and extend the research to a second case study site was based on the researcher's belief in the potential offered by *new space* and DVA.

Figure XXXV demonstrates each step of the research process and those step changes required from the Case Study One Site (Gateshead, the Physical Community) to the Case Study Two Site (The Web, the Virtual Community). The diagram sets out the data collection strategies employed and the development of the EHD within the hermeneutic [analysis] cycle.

9.3.1: The Sample

As discussed in 4.10.3 the rationale to take a purposeful sampling approach was based on the underpinning philosophy of the research that with the individual central, understanding would be achieved not through a statistical analysis but by collecting rich qualitative data. A purposive sample would select individuals who were actively using *new space* and DVA resources. Employing a purposive sample, an acknowledged method in qualitative research, was not considered as a means to a self-fulfilling prophecy i.e. respondents already active in the issue being explored and the research obtaining the answer it required. Rather the research wanted to explore why individuals were choosing to use *new space* and DVA, and to include those

respondents who were not active would determine this to have been a very different study. The value of this engagement and use of DVA was of particular interest; the researcher wanted to understand how the individual constructed value and applied this to the particular experience. To ask directly (and this was never done) the question *is this valuable?* or *what value...?* would not have revealed that understanding of value and value construction.

The development of the case study sites had a direct impact on data collection in that it denied the researcher the opportunity to observe the participants directly using *new space* and DVA resources. Observation carried out in the library space permitted observation of users of the *new space* only and not DVA resources. Once the move to the virtual case study site had been implemented the researcher could not employ any observation of the physical nature of each respondents space only her own physical space and presence within the virtual space.

9.3.2: Textual Analysis

"Experience is not really meaningful until it has found a home in language."
(Madison, 1988, p. 165 in Moules, 2002).

Using hermeneutics as a holistic method for data collection and analysis permitted textual analysis. Expression of value came through the use of emotive language, dealing with feelings, self, and personal meaning. While *new space* is concerned with the physical and the visual, the data collected i.e. the Individual's discussion of their activity in *new space* was captured entirely as a narrative in a textual format. The textual data offered a richness that could have been further enriched by collection of the corresponding visual data. The construction of the interviews did not take full advantage of the opportunity to collect more visual data for example screen shots, image files and web links. The addition of more visual data would have further enhanced the application of the EHD and allowed for a visual analysis process.

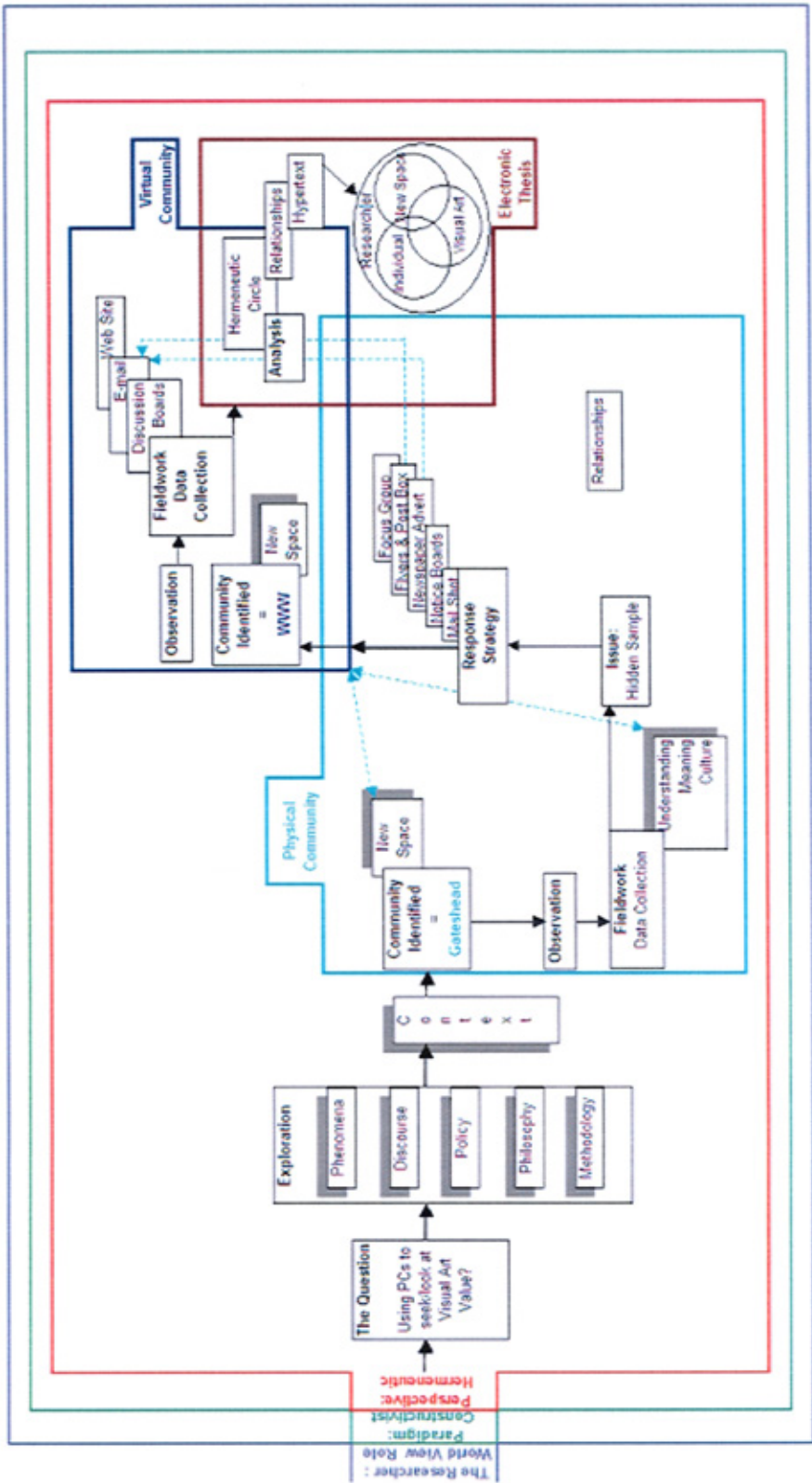


Figure XXXV: Research Paradigm

9.3.3: DVA Resources

It was never the intention of the research to critically analyse and evaluate collections and the DVA viewed by each individual, rather to understand why, how and where he or she accessed and used these resources. On the principle that this understanding could not be measured, a rich illuminative picture was developed for each individual telling a story of his or her viewing and use.

The analysis (6.4.1.3) demonstrated the vast and diverse range of DVA resources; to fully map and list these resources would have proved an impossible task. The researcher did briefly consider a statistical mapping of resources however if we know that a percentage of the sample use Google as a search engine and similarly a percentage view the National Gallery's collection this would only provide a partial and superficial understanding, that is it would not permit insight into why, where and the integration of that use into the individual's daily activity.

9.3.4: The Electronic Hypertext Document, Strengths and Limitations

"The physical landscape becomes wedded to the landscape of the mind, to the roving imagination, and where the mind may lead is anybody's guess" (Basso, 1996, p.55).

In addressing both the physical and virtual environment in the concept of *new space* a multi-method flexible approach was needed to accommodate the exploration of this and an understanding of value. A crucial development in this research was the decision to create the EHD. The diagram, Figure XXXVI provides a visual interpretation of the research, however what is missing is a sense of the context of *new space*, the self-awareness by the reader replicating the experience of the individual looking at the screen and the virtual environment.

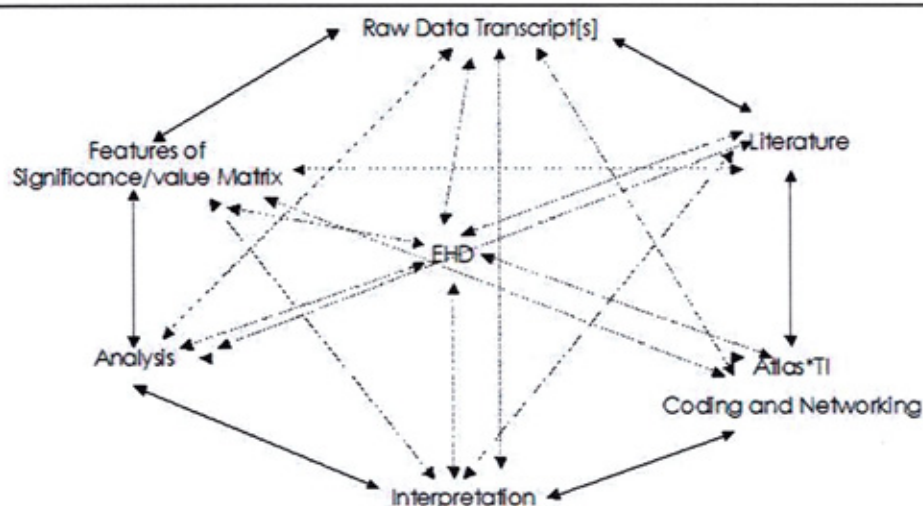


Figure XXXVI: Demonstrating the Movement between Research Elements

There are strengths, limitations and implications of both versions of the thesis (hard copy and electronic hypertext) but critical to this research is that conscious understanding of *new space* by the reader. To participate in the reading of the thesis by

- sitting in a physical space (home, library or work)
- facing the PC screen
- viewing the EHD pages

enables an immediate connection and realisation of the concept of *new space*, the reader instantly engages with an understanding of that concept.

How can we know the dancer from the dance? (Yeats, 1928)

Using the metaphor of the dance, the EHD demonstrates the movement between the literature, the raw data, and the data in its conceptual and descriptive form and the process of analysis and synthesis. In the hard copy version this movement is constrained and at times impossible to recreate. For example, following the development of a theme, a circular path beginning with the raw data, through to the *features of significance/value* matrix, coding and networking in Atlas*TI, the analysis, interpretation and the link to the literature, is impossible to capture on paper.

The EHD enables the reader to not only move in that circular path but also to step across or back to a particular point. This movement is demonstrated in Figure XXXVI, however the encounters and understanding from that movement can only be suggested. The process is only demonstrated at the category level e.g. raw data and not the depth of detail below each category.

9.3.4.1: Inclusion of Raw Data

The EHD permitted the inclusion of all raw data and therefore nothing was hidden from the reader. This inclusion was determined to be a strength in terms of transparency, making visible the audit trail and demonstrating a triangulation of evidence and the ability to follow the development of ideas to their outcomes. Once the research was concluded this inclusion offers the opportunity for further analysis of the raw data e.g. the potential for other interested parties to use the data and analyse in different ways (9.4.3).

However this inclusion of raw data can also place the researcher in a vulnerable position as all data is open to scrutiny and in the interpretation of the data, which is the researcher's own [subjective], interpretation. Questions can be raised that may not necessarily be raised in a traditional thesis format where generally all data is not included. Questions can also be raised in the data itself not in terms of the richness but in the quantity, is there enough? This is a question that is often raised in qualitative research and is required to be rationalised by the researcher.

"Qualitative studies typically employ multiple forms of evidence [and] there is no statistical test of significance to determine if results count"
(Eisner, 1991, p. 39).

In this research judgments about usefulness and credibility are left to the researcher and the reader (Hoepfl, 1997). In doing so it is acknowledged explicitly in both versions of the thesis, as identified by Patton (1990), that sampling errors can arise in qualitative research due to distortions caused by insufficient breadth and lack of depth in the sampling and data collection at each site. The inclusion of the raw data and the ability to view the analysis

and interpretation process acted as a check to ensure such distortions were identified, addressed or avoided.

The paper format of the thesis has the usual strengths associated with this traditional form of presentation i.e. that the researcher presents their own (linear) analysis and understanding of the research and its data in the form of a 'story'. Preparing the two together was challenging but provided the opportunity to create more robust outputs, each one benefiting from the symbiotic relationship of the two forms.

Therefore providing a more reflective and interpretative presentation in the use of hypertext permitted an increased attention to the context of *new space* and allowed a re-formulation of understanding of that context for the richest interpretation possible

9.4: Proposals for Future Research

Although this particular study has drawn to an end it is not an ending but like all research, a beginning for new and related avenues of research and research questions.

Three areas in particular present themselves as exciting and worthwhile areas to pursue. Firstly the further consideration of value and how that could be employed to support the provision and delivery of services and resources. Second and related to value the analysis of the DVA resources viewed by the individual and third the EHD as a tool for research and teaching.

9.4.1: Value

In the context of this research value is considered in terms of personal meaning through relationships, their association with the experience, freedom of choice and the individual in the active engagement of the experience. The challenge is to be able to demonstrate this understanding in such a way that providers can employ this understanding in the delivery, use and development of their services and resources. This could be achieved through the design of

a framework or tool to capture and identify *value* and then translate this information into an accepted demonstration and indication of the service provision. Such a framework or tool could contribute to toolkits such as *the Access for All Toolkit* (MLA, 2004), *The Cultural Framework and Toolkit for Thames Gateway North Kent* (Culture SouthEast, 2006), *Watch This Space Toolkit* (Engage, 2006).

9.4.2: Analysis of Visual Data

This research sought the holistic understanding of the process of access to DVA. The identification of visual art as an everyday thing and the emergent themes establishing the need or drive to seek out DVA (8.2.3.1, 8.2.3.2) suggests an inherent quality within the DVA resource itself. Further visual analysis of the images viewed (within that particular context) could be used to further the discourse around visual art information and the use of that visual information in [lifelong] learning.

9.4.3: A Research and Teaching Tool

The EHD can be considered as a tool, enabling the raw data and the research as a whole to become more accessible and therefore potentially more usable. It is in that context the research and the EHD have become the basis to begin further research in the pedagogical applications of technology as a research and teaching tool and to include the use and application of Internet technologies as methodological tools in qualitative research supporting professional practice. The use of Internet technologies in qualitative research tends to focus on methods of data collection and dissemination (Clarke, 2000; Mann and Stewart, 2000) and has not as yet recognised fully the potential of the medium to ensure transparency in the research process, as a resource base in terms of raw data and methodological practices, and to facilitate analysis by others beyond the researcher and using the technology in this way can dynamically demonstrate the 'how' research (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 2002).

In terms of a research and teaching tool, and the relationship between pedagogy and technology, three research questions have emerged:

1. Can a thesis in the format of an EHD be used as a research tool with the potential for researchers to evaluate the EHD as a tool and the opportunity to use and analyse the raw data in different ways?
2. Can an electronic thesis be considered as part of the natural progression of the researcher and development of the methodology?
3. What are the advantages of submitting a thesis in such a format particularly in supporting the development of the researcher's practice and understanding of the research process through creativity in the development of a dynamic electronic thesis?

9.5: Summary

The areas of new knowledge i.e. value and *new space* are as significant and challenging for Government, researchers and providers today as they were when this research began six years ago.

It is vital that the development, provision and delivery of *new space* and DVA resources are informed by an understanding of their particular use and the personal meaning derived from that use i.e. **value**. This is increasingly important as the Government continues to address the issues of lifelong learning and low engagement (with the UK's museum, gallery and archive collections) through the use of ICTs, in particular the web and new media.

The Government believes that ICTs are key to increasing this engagement; therefore a deeper understanding of the use and value to the individual of *new space* and DVA resources is essential for providers. Consideration must be given to the increasing use of the **home space**; this presents a greater challenge for the provider in their service delivery. Providers are constrained by the established mechanisms for delivery of their services and the requirements placed upon them through the best value system of performance measurement. This therefore requires, that the provider seeks a

richer understanding of the use and value of *new space* and DVA resources in this very *individual personal space*.

What is needed is a shared recognition by Government, associated agencies, research communities and providers of the **role of the individual** and those very powerful *human stories* from which value can be determined. A method for capturing those stories must be developed so that they can be employed as reliable evidence to support design, delivery and evaluation of [DVA] resources and services and inform the development, implementation and facilitation of *new space*.

Key to this study has been the relationships between the individual, *new space* and visual art. Hypertext is concerned with relationships and it was for this reason the EHD was created as an holistic tool to present an electronic version of the research. The development of the EHD has become the basis to begin further research into the pedagogical application of such technology as a research and teaching tool.

As discussed earlier in this Chapter (9.4) a number of opportunities present themselves as avenues for further research, but it is the understanding and interpretation of value that the researcher believes to be of critical importance. The research therefore advocates for a meaningful framework in which value can be identified, discussed and accepted as being crucial in the provision of [DVA] resources and *new space*.

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10: Appendices

Appendix I

Aesthetic Mapping: Principle Areas of Aesthetic Thinking

Aestheticism	Pre-supposed value of art; Appreciated for aesthetic merit requiring no justification; Assume common feature of experience of all diverse arts; General criteria for judgement; Art is self-sufficient serving no ulterior purpose; Focus on Formal qualities (Bell/Fry).
Aesthetic Judgement	Based on experience pleasure; Emphasis on subjective response; Associated with truth claims object's properties; Kant distinguished from 1. Expression of subjective likes and dislikes 2 Ascribes an objective property. Logic of Aesthetic Judgement genius/ creative freedom as universal. Judgement differs in 4 ways quantity, quality, relation modality.
Objective Aesthetic Object	Beauty objective quality experienced for what it is not merely for what experience the properties does to viewer; This explains why visual art possess a value not replicable in other media. (Fischer, Tolstoy); Is an objection to Aesthetic theory cannot capture contemporary art world need a social concept like Dickies, Stolnitz; Holds that essence of art resides in artists sentiment / emotion making dimensions of too broad & too narrow.
Subjective Aesthetic	Subjective responses are common to the nature of the individual experiencing of subjects; Moves away from premise that Aesthetic Value is a property residing in object.; Property is Aesthetic if viewers react with pleasure/emotion/feeling; Explains why people disagree about Aesthetic Value
Aesthetic Attitude	Dickie: attending to work interestedly i.e. with an ulterior purpose disinterestedly without an ulterior purpose. Distraction is not attention but inattention; the notion of AA misleads theorists incorrectly sets limits on; A relevance giving incorrect distinctions between appreciation & criticism moral value & moral vision; Attitude if individual determines how perceive world selective attention purpose-perceive-differently, attitude organises & directs awareness of world; See object relevant to purpose; Isolates object takes in whole nature
Aesthetic Thoughts	Art resists efforts to define it in part because of the multiplicity of values; Croce 2 forms of knowledge intuitive and logical; Intuitive by knowledge of images obtained through intellect; Logical through knowledge of concepts gained through intellect; Intuition not to be confused with sensation or perception of the real; Intuition is expressive/productive distinguished from what is felt; Art is concerned with intuition privileges no sense therefore cannot identify a group as inherently aesthetically richer than others; Meaning of art & beauty experience of them : WOA valued ways to approach as sociologist/moralist do not grasp intrinsic value To do so must look at work without pre-occupation of origins or consequences Generic Aesthetic Concept Art essence of art as artefact whose primary design function is possessing ++ A properties; AA: Aesthetic Attitude.
Aesthetic Value	Linked to satisfaction; Bell significant form; Mark out from truth/goodness/utility; Perceiver will like object if is recognised; Asks the question subjective/objective power to affect the mind Pleasure sole criteria of aesthetic merit (Value); Provides an account of beauty.
Aesthetics	From Greek "perception"; 1753 term introduced Baumgarten; Philosophy on principles of beauty; Experience / Judgement; Philosophy of art; Difference in meanings ask questions: How can show aesthetic Judgement? justify one view from another? what is a work of art? Difficult to determine clear meaning can encompass symbolism, expression, significant form; Kant Critique of Judgement antinomy of taste analysis of beautiful & sublime dominated aesthetics; Stolnitz; define as: perception of object for the sake of perceiving consider all objects man at any time has contemplated; This will include art of different periods forms & styles, diverse objects, scenes of nature; Aesthetic philosophy as historical or social, self-contained value political/ideological function Whatever social role ask what is the Aesthetic Judgement and Aesthetic Value.
Aesthetic Interest	Derived from Kant savour aspects for intrinsic merits, colour form concerned with production; Sympathetic, active discriminatory appreciation of the qualities of objects, towards any object Aesthetic Experience occurs while taking the Aesthetic Attitude; Beardsley art is produced with intention & capacity to satisfy Aesthetic Interest. Audiences should direct to this then art could be referred to general human domain.
Philosophy of Art	Art many values not just aesthetic; Aestheticism too narrow view of art; In relation to mind producing; In relation to mind perceiving; If prime interest in art = aesthetic then the aesthetic must cover everything conceivable of value in art.
Aesthetic Theory	Bell: Significant form the aesthetic emotion; Beardsley: Aesthetic experience; Kant: Critique of judgement; Dewey: Aesthetic is a commonplace experience; Individual always perceived as a social being realisation of individual achievement in social context social role for art; Schopenhauer: suspension of the will of the mind i.e. empties all but the object. (AA); Croce: Work of art sensuous intuition of some emotion and an adequate expression, canvas words etc Linguistic; aesthetic as one; Lessing: beauty originating from constituent parts, painting as spatial media influences character, determines possibility and limitations

Appendix II

Interview Questions: An example of the interview questions from the research website, <http://www.thevalueofart.co.uk>

Questionnaire: Accessing Visual Art on the Internet

I am carrying out research at Northumbria University, Newcastle Upon Tyne, England, into the use of PCs and the Internet to view visual art.

If you would like to participate please complete the questionnaire below and be assured that all responses are anonymous and treated in the strictest of confidence.



To complete the form place the flashing cursor in the box below the question and type your response. When you have completed the questionnaire click on the submit button

1. How / Why did you discover art on the Internet?
2. When was the first time you used a computer to look for an art subject?
3. How did you go about finding what you were looking for?
4. When was the last time you used a computer to look for an art subject?
5. Can you describe what you looked for and how you went about finding what you were looking for?
6. Where would you normally use a computer to look at art? Is this something you normally do alone?
7. What form or type of art do you look at? On which topics does this relate to?
8. Generally, what is the main reason for you to look for art on the Internet?
9. When you use the computer to look for an art subject do you:

Make a plan before you start to help you find the subject? If yes can you give an example of your plan?

If no how do you begin to look for the subject?
10. What sources do you use? How frequently do you use them? Why do you use these sources?
11. When you have found what you are looking for what do you do next?



Questionnaire: Visual Art

1. Are you involved in art activities either through work or leisure time? (If yes please explain)
2. What type of art do you like?
3. Can you recall when you first became interested in art? (If yes please explain)
4. What was it that sparked this interest?
5. Is art an everyday thing to you? Why?
6. Can art be for everybody?
7. Do you visit? exhibitions galleries museums How often?
8. There is a lot of discussion about culture and being cultural, in real terms to your everyday life what does it mean to you?



(Additional Questions) Focus Group

To complete the form, place the flashing cursor in the box below the question and type your response. When you have completed the questionnaire click on the submit button. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers just your valued opinion, thank you for completing the questionnaire.

What were your expectations before you began this activity?

After choosing your 3 web sites, did you alter your choice once you began searching?

Why?

Did you save anything... images, text or links? For what purpose?

Thinking back to your visit to the web sites. Was there anything that happened that was significant, meaningful or notable? What happened?

What did you think of the experience of looking at art/ art issues in this way?

Thinking back to the discussion of "What is the Learning Society and Life Long Learning"

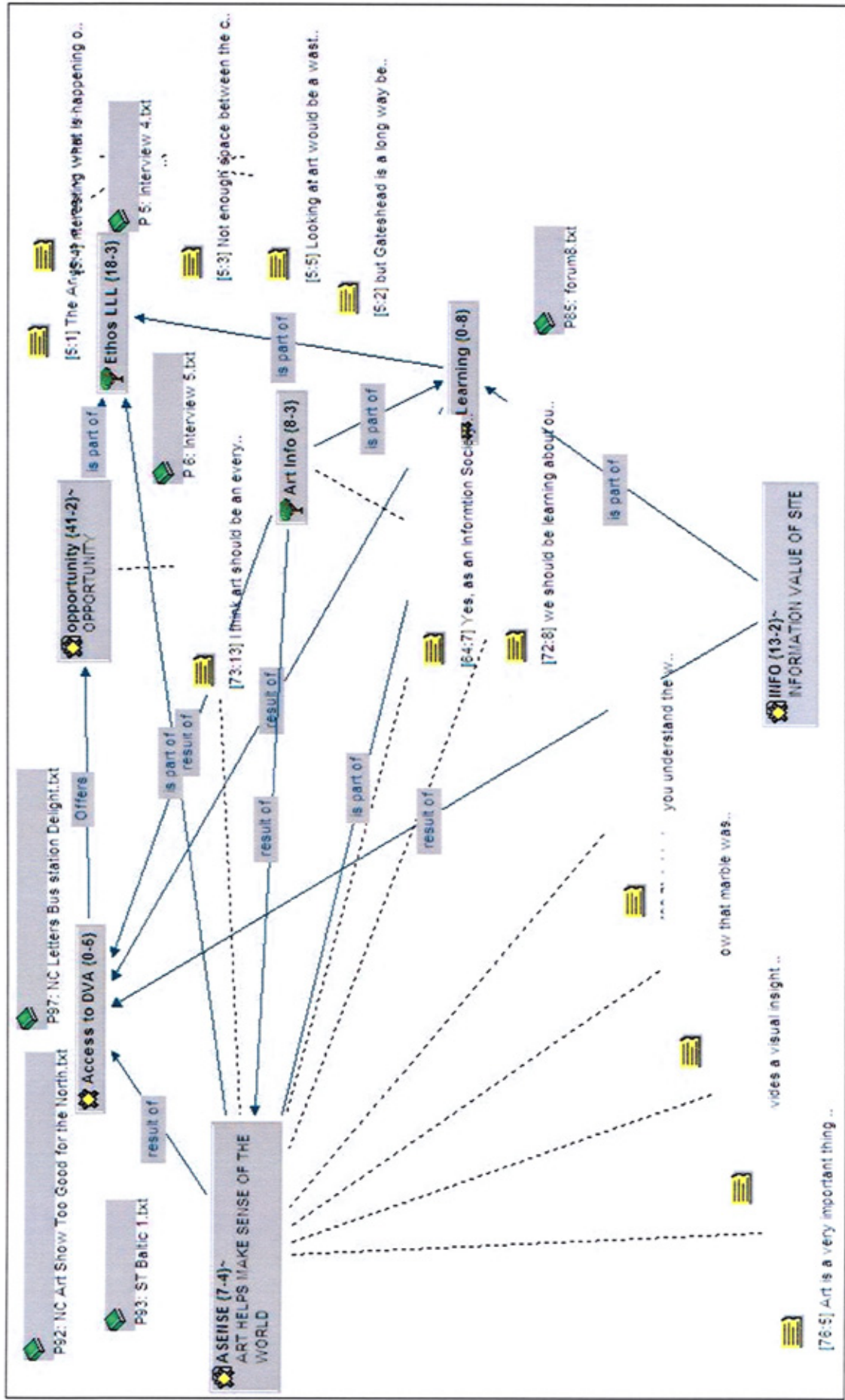
Do you think providing access [potentially to every individual] to Visual Art in this 'virtual' space corresponds to the ethos of the Learning Society and Life Long Learning? Why?

Should art be an everyday thing ? Why?

There is a lot of discussion about 'culture' and being 'cultural', in real terms to everyday life and learning is it a significant element in the Information and Learning Society?

Appendix III

Data Analysis Software Network View: The Individual and Learning



Appendix IV

The Features of Significance/Value Matrix. Adapted from Love (1994)

Loves's (1994) 'features of significance', *affect, explicit/implicit, historical and serendipity* were set against the four elements of value construction i.e. information seeking process, context, mode of access and use to explore and identify the emerging themes.

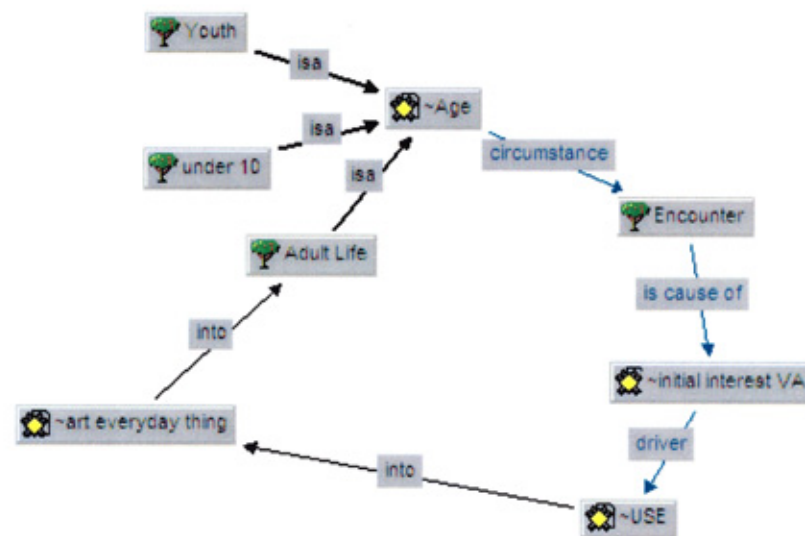
Features \ Element	Information Seeking Process	Context	Access	Use
Affect	Art Information; LLL; Information (Content)	Active in the Arts; Age; Interest; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Ethos LLL; Identity; Negative View; Pride(Gateshead); Positive View;	Available; LLL; Information (Content); Opportunity; Uncertainty;	Experience (Aesthetic); Attitude, Opinion; Art as an Everyday Thing (Art); A Sense; Encounter; Experience (DVA); Importance (VA); Art as an Everyday Thing (Purpose); Purpose (DVA);
Explicit/Implicit	Discovery (DVA); Effect; Ethos LLL; Finding Aids; Recording; Resources; Saving; Decision Making; Search Strategy; Web Links (DVA);	Personal Development (Culture); Experience (Physical); Experience (Virtual); Experience (Leisure Activity); Participation;	Quickness (DVA); Expectation; ICT; LLL; Time; Availability; Space (Physical); Space (Virtual);	Don't Use to View (VA); Experience (DVA); Use to View; Object; Subject; Function;
Historical	Recording; Use ICT to View (DVA);	Adult Life; Age; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (People-Gateshead); Initial Interest (Art); Residence; Purpose; Under 10; Youth;	Art for Everyone; Visit Gallery (Physical);	Art as an Everyday Thing (Art); A Sense; Artist's Work; Frequency of Use (DVA);
Serendipity		Attitude and Opinion (Culture-Gateshead); Culture Negative View; Culture Is: (Is Way of Life), (Is Antisocial Behaviour), (Is Buildings), (Is Choice Media), (Is Clubs Pubs), (Is Creativity), (Is Critical to Life), (Is Diversity), (Is Eating Out), (Is Education), (Is Everyday Things), (Is Football), (Is Good Public Services), (Is Growth of a Place), (Is Healthy Mind and Body), (Is History and Tradition), (Is Language), (Is Middle Class), (Is Museums and Galleries), (Is Music), (Is Needed to Survive), (Is Negative), (Is Parks), (Is People), (Is Performing Arts), (Is Regeneration), (Is Shopping), (Is Understanding), (Is Uplifting), (Is Visual Art), (Is Writing); Meaning of Culture; Resistance to Culture;		Activity; Art as an Everyday Thing (Art);

Appendix V

Encounter or Experience: Themes Age, Under 10, Youth

The initial interest with art occurred at an early age and was sparked by an encounter or experience. This appendix provides the data network view and the coding and quotation data generated from the data analysis software to demonstrate those links and relationships within and to these themes.

Data Analysis Network View, Coding List and Extract of Coded Quotations



Network-View: age
 Super21/06/04
 21:51:22
 Codes (8):
 Adult Life {12-2}
 Age {13-4}~
 Art everyday thing {31-2}~
 Encounter {12-2}
 Initial interest VA {23-2}~
 Under 10 {4-1}
 Use {40-5}~
 Youth {13-1}

The network view illustrates the link between age (in relation to the encounter an age in the early years of the respondents' life under 10 – adolescent) and due to particular circumstance an encounter takes place with an arts or cultural activity. This encounter becomes the catalyst for an initial interest in art[s] and a driver to engage in regular activity, which continues into adult life. The coding list details the themes attached to and displayed in the network. Below is an example of how the codes and their attached quotations can be generated in the data analysis software.

```

HU: Value to the Individual of Access to DVA in a Community
File: [C:\DOCUME~1\h\Desktop\PHDDAT~1\ATLAS\Value to the
Individual of Access to DVA in a Community]
Edited by: Super
Date/Time: 09/01/06 13:26:59
-----
All current quotations (919). Quotation-Filter: All
-----
  
```

P10: Interview H CC2.txt - 10:2 (16:16) (Super)
Codes: [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [under 10]
[Youth]

about 3 or 4 , my mum took me often to Glasgow Art
Galleries and Museum

P14: Interview MBE AM1.txt - 14:5 (14:18) (Super)
Codes: [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [Youth]

I became aware of art as a very young child as my mother
studied fine art at Sunderland University before she
married. Our home was filled with artwork, from my mother's
own work to prints and books about other artists. This
provided me with a window, a view that sparked and fuelled
my interest in art.

P16: Interview MBE MB1.txt - 16:18 (80:81) (Super)
Codes: [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [Youth]

My interest was really kick-started by seeing articles in
the Sunday colour supplements during the 1970's, but I've
always enjoyed art

P16: Interview MBE MB1.txt - 16:19 (84:85) (Super)
Codes: [Adult Life] [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [Youth]

It was a long time ago, but in my scrap books are clippings
of Jackson Pollock's work, Patrick Caulfield, David Hockney
etc

P19: Interview MBE MA1.txt - 19:21 (91:91) (Super)
Codes: [object] [subject]

My parents let us choose our own pictures from a very early
age - my mother had several books with pages that she
allowed us to frame. the first picture I remember spending
my own money on was a Keene about age 9.

P31: gb2.txt - 31:6 (8:8) (Super)
Codes: [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [Youth]

In the 1960's at school.

P31: gb2.txt - 31:7 (8:8) (Super)
Codes: [initial interest VA] [visit galleries...]

More recently becoming seriously interested, taking
classes, attending workshops, visiting galleries, making my
own work and exhibiting it

P57: gbunn4.txt - 57:11 (28:34) (Super)
Codes: [Age] [Encounter] [initial interest VA] [Youth]

I became seriously interested in history of art and art
appreciation(particularly 20th c.) at around 16. Knew owner
/ commissioner of art with a major private collection at
that time. Probably a reaction to specialising in
scientific subjects at school. Probably a reaction to
specialising in scientific subjects at school. I am a

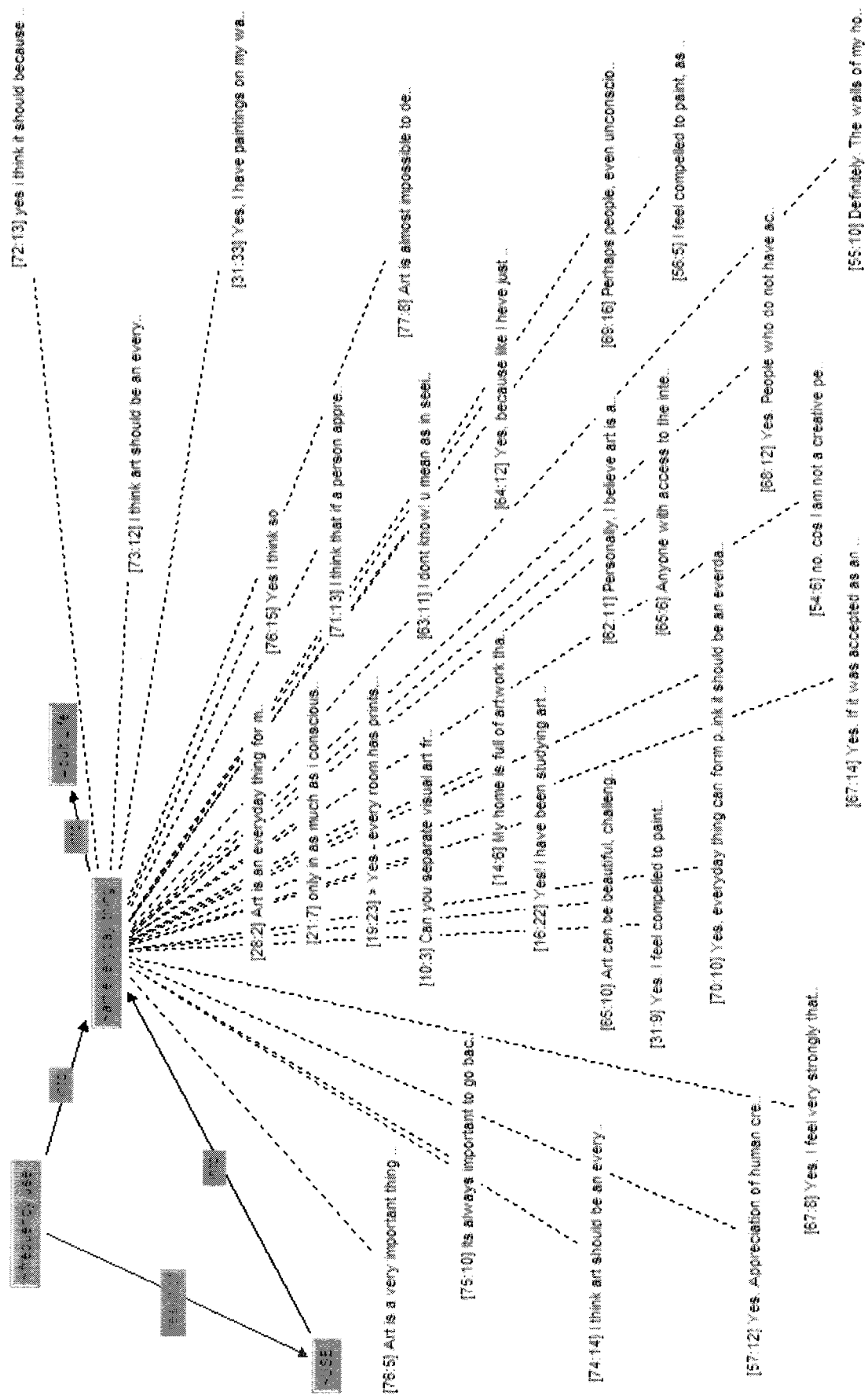
professional mathematician and that is very close to art
(creative urge and satisfaction)

Appendix VI

Network View From The Data Analysis Software.

Theme: Arts As An Everyday Thing

The network display illustrates the cyclical process and relationship between using, the frequency of that use and the acknowledgement of art as an everyday activity. This particular network view allows the connected quotations to be displayed. An extract of the list of quotations displayed in the network is listed below. The numbers preceding each quotation refer to the transcript number and the line within the transcript from which the quotation was extracted.



Network-View: everyday thing

Super 11/09/04 20:09:59

Total number of nodes: 35

Codes (4):

Adult Life {12-2}

Art everyday thing {31-2}~

Frequency use {14-2}~

Use {40-5}~

Quotations [text] (31):

10:3 Can you separate visual art fr.. (26:32)

14:6 My home is full of artwork tha.. (21:28)

16:22 Yes! I have been studying art .. (88:91)

19:23 > Yes - every room has prints,.. (99:99)

21:7 only in as much as i conscious.. (93:96)

28:2 Art is an everyday thing for m.. (20:20)

31:9 Yes. I feel compelled to paint.. (10:11)

31:33 Yes, I have paintings on my wa.. (58:58)

54:6 no. cos I am not a creative pe.. (20:21)

55:10 Definitely. The walls of my ho.. (25:27)

56:5 I feel compelled to paint, as .. (24:24)

57:12 Yes. Appreciation of human cre.. (37:37)

62:11 Personally, I believe art is a.. (61:64)

63:11 I dont know! u mean as in seei.. (59:61)

64:12 Yes, because like I heve just .. (62:63)

65:6 Anyone with access to the inte.. (27:29)

65:10 Art can be beautiful, challeng.. (55:56)

66:9 I think it should be an everda.. (64:66)

67:8 Yes, I feel very strongly that.. (31:32)

67:14 Yes. If it was accepted as an .. (58:61)

68:12 Yes. People who do not have ac.. (51:52)

69:16 Perhaps people, even unconscio.. (55:63)

70:10 Yes, everyday thing can form p.. (48:48)

71:13 I think that if a person appre.. (81:93)

72:13 yes i think it should because .. (51:53)

73:12 I think art should be an every.. (48:50)

74:14 I think art should be an every.. (53:60)

Appendix VII

Network View From The Data Analysis Software.

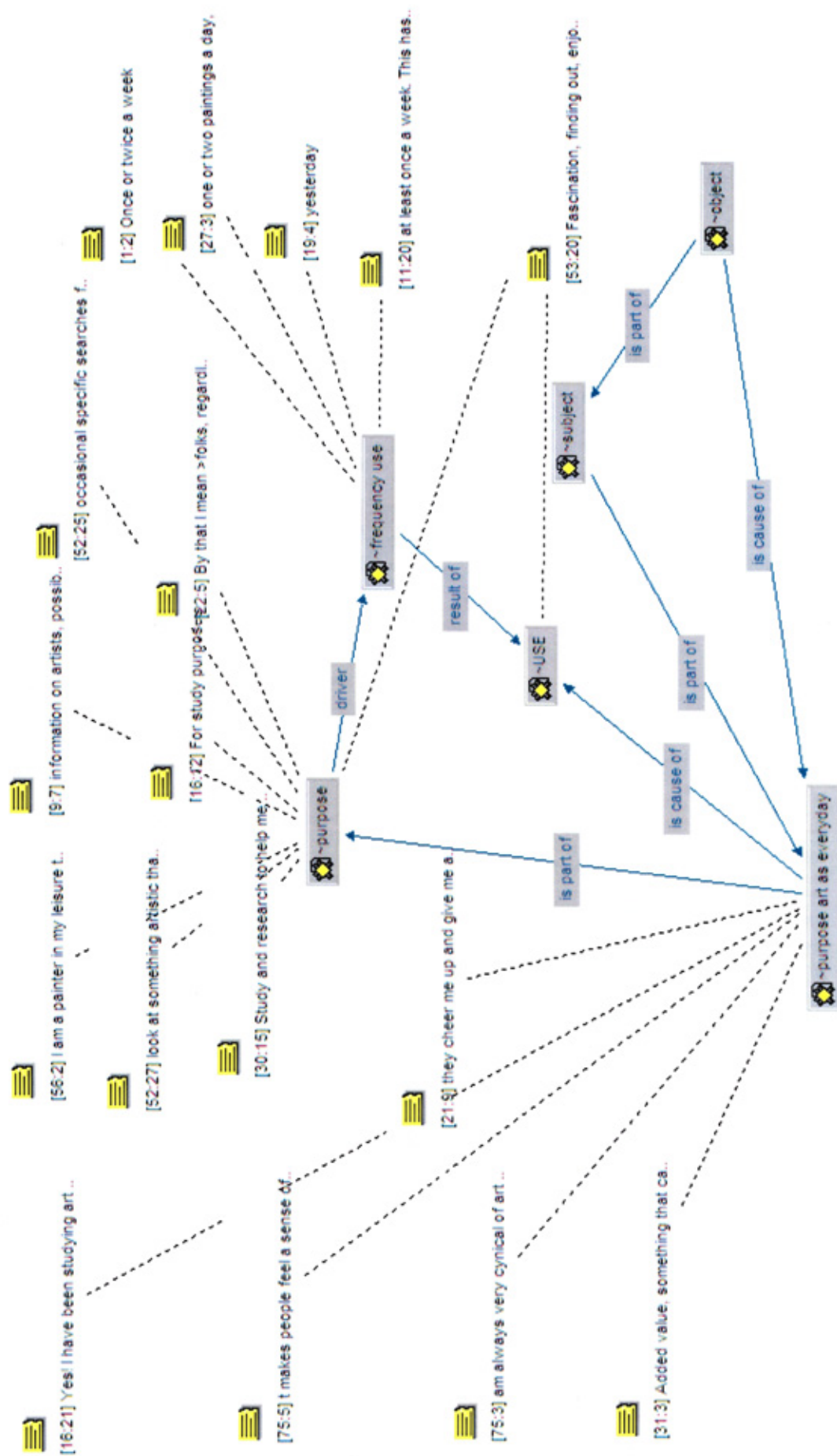
Theme: Motivation

A number of themes emerge that can be identified as driving the individual to seek out DVA:

- The relationship between use
- The subject and object
- The frequency that access occurs
- The individual's consideration of the purpose of DVA as an 'everyday activity' and can reveal the individual's motivation.

In the network view the cycle of subject and object does not represent a 'divorce' from the rest of the diagram but acts as a pivotal driver in seeking out particular subjects and objects which in turn increases use, frequency of that use and purpose.

Purpose includes, study, leisure and information.



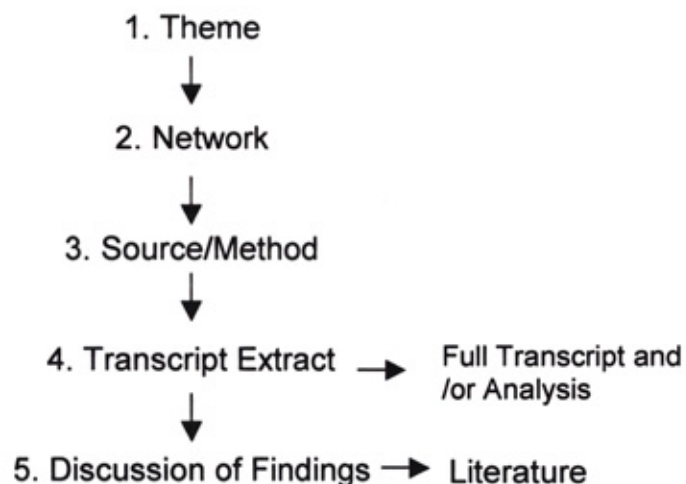
Appendix VIII

Analysis and the Electronic Hypertext Document

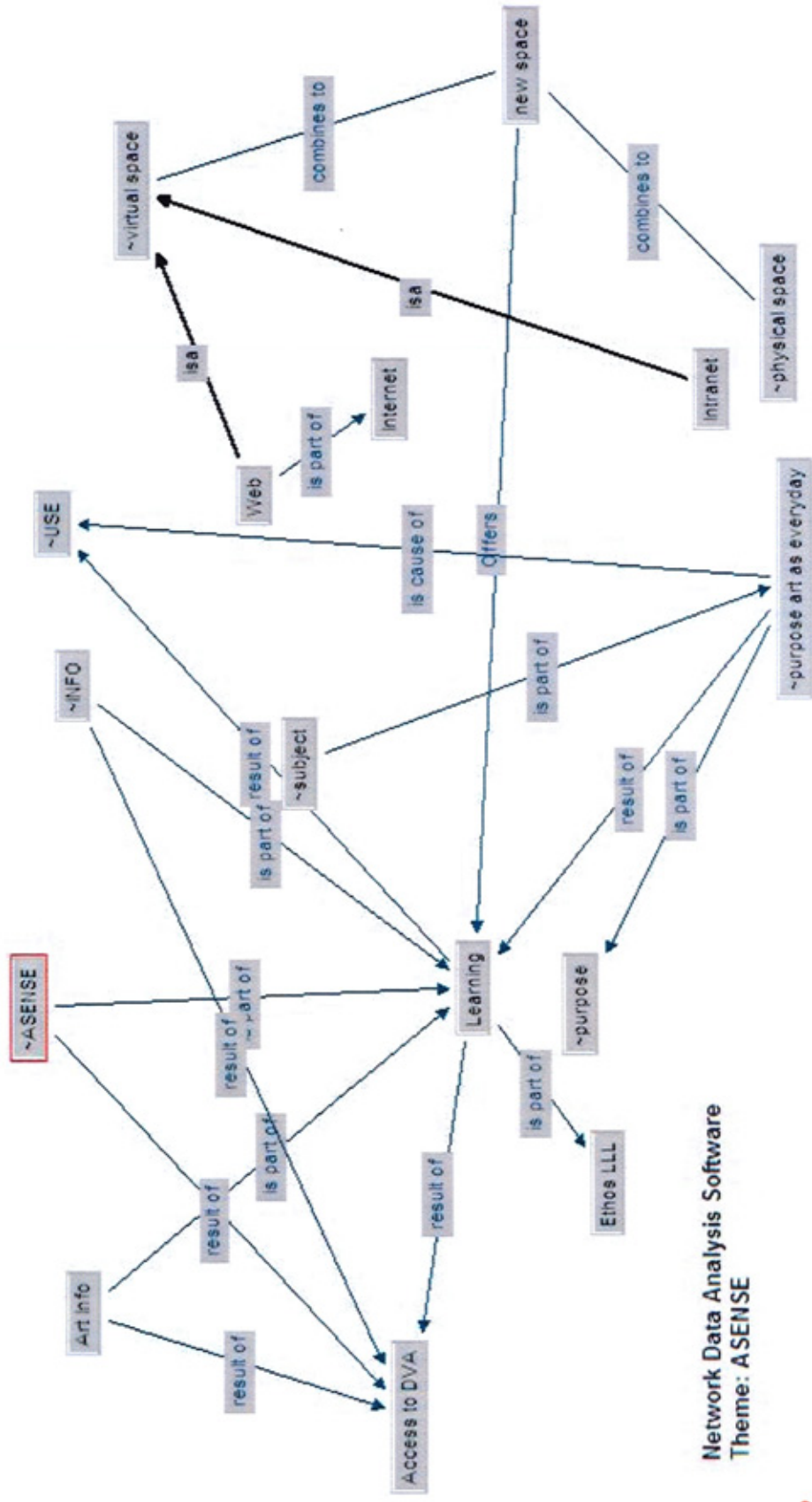
Theme: Art Helps Make Sense Of The World (ASense)

Using the EHD the analyses of the emerging themes can be explored by re-tracing the researcher's steps through the analysis process.

For example, to explore the analysis and findings of the theme '**art helps make sense of the world**' (ASense) the theme is recorded in the *Features of Significance/Value matrix* (Appendix I) and linked directly to all the associated data sets, the output of the analysis process within the data analysis software and the primary documents. This 'audit trail' connects the researcher's method of analysis with the primary documents (raw data) and this process is described in the following five steps.



Features \ Element	Information Seeking Process	Context	Access	Use
Affect	Art Information; LLL; Information (Content)	Active in the Arts; Age; Interest; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Ethos LLL; Identity; Negative View; Pride(Gateshead); Positive View;	Available; LLL; Information (Content); Opportunity; Uncertainty;	Experience (Aesthetic); Attitude, Opinion; Art as an Everyday Thing (Art); A Sense; Encounter; Experience (DVA); Importance (VA); Art as an Everyday Thing (Purpose); Purpose (DVA);
Explicit/Implicit	Discovery (DVA); Effect; Ethos LLL; Finding Aids; Recording; Resources; Saving; Decision Making; Search Strategy; Web Links (DVA).	Personal Development (Culture); Experience (Physical); Experience (Virtual); Experience (Leisure Activity); Participation.	Quickness (DVA); Expectation; ICT; LLL; Time; Availability; Space (Physical); Space (Virtual);	Don't Use to View (VA); Experience (DVA); Use to View; Object; Subject; Function;
Historical	Recording; Use ICT to View (DVA);	Adult Life; Age; Attitude and Opinion (Art-Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (Gateshead); Attitude and Opinion (People-Gateshead); Initial Interest (Art); Residence; Purpose; Under 10; Youth.	Art for Everyone; Visit Gallery (Physical);	Art as an Everyday Thing (Art); A Sense; Artist's Work; Frequency of Use (DVA);
Serendipity	STEP 1	Attitude and Opinion (Culture-Gateshead); Culture Negative View; Culture Is: (Is Way of Life), (Is Antisocial Behaviour), (Is Buildings), (Is Choice Media), (Is Clubs Pubs), (Is Creativity), (Is Critical to Life), (Is Diversity), (Is Eating Out), (Is Education), (Is Everyday Things), (Is Football), (Is Good Public Services), (Is Growth of a Place), (Is Healthy Mind and Body), (Is History and Tradition), (Is Language), (Is Middle Class), (Is Museums and Galleries), (Is Music), (Is Needed to Survive), (Is Negative), (Is Parks), (Is People), (Is Performing Arts), (Is Regeneration), (Is Shopping), (Is Understanding), (Is Uplifting), (Is Visual Art), (Is Writing); Meaning of Culture; Resistance to Culture;		Activity; Art as an Everyday Thing (Art);



Network Data Analysis Software
Theme: ASENSE

Question	Method	E-mail Interviews	Web Interviews	Discussion Board	GHead Interview	F Group Face Face	F Group Web Based
Lifelong Learning							
Experience		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leisure		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visual Art-Learning		✓	✓	✓			
DVA Learning Social Function		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
ICTs – new space							
Cultural –social in everyday life		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Network of Resources							
Motivation Access		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public Providers			✓		✓	✓	✓
Relationships		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use and Access							
Provision		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Access		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Barriers		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Understanding Culture		✓	✓				
Identified Community		✓					
Understanding Value		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Detail of the Source and Methods Matrix (Figure XII)

Theme: ASENSE **Step 3**

Respondent 16 (Focus Group)

[Link to Full Data Transcript](#)

[Link to Discussion of Findings](#)

After choosing your 3 web sites, did you alter your choice once you began searching? Why? What were your expectations before you began this activity?

I expected to find some art that can not be seen other places then on the internet. And maybe some collections of art with some links or other info about where I can get more information about art work. I define art as something that expresses a view upon something. Something that makes me think and puts things into a new context.

Thinking back to the discussion of "What is the Learning Society and Life Long Learning" Do you think providing access [potentially to every individual] to Visual Art in this 'virtual' space corresponds to the ethos of the Learning Society and Life Long Learning? Why?

Off course it helps in the processes of long life learning. Art is a very important thing in life. Art puts things in to new contexts and therefore makes us think about the world around us. Not everybody can go to the museums and not everybody wants to, but by putting collections of art work on the internet more people may see it and get interested in art. Last summer a French photographer put up his photos outside in the middle of Copenhagen. That was a great idea, now everybody saw his fantastic photos, also people who would never go to a gallery or a museum. And maybe the same could happen on the net, suddenly you find information about new things. I know it is easier to expose art in the public space if the aim is to get more people to see you art, but the Internet may be a good way to.

Respondent 12 (Focus Group)

[Link to Full Data Transcript](#)

[Link to Discussion of Findings](#)

What did you think of the experience of looking at art/ art issues in this way?

I thought it was really interesting because it broadened my awareness of what people referred to as art and it also allowed you to follow an area of interest and see what other images, paintings etc had been created. it also put art across in a variety of ways eg a fun manner, a 'serious' manner and so on

Should art be an everyday thing ? Why?

yes i think it should because a lot of messages can be put across by art probably more successfully than by text. i also think it helps creativity and sometimes an awareness of your surroundings

There is a lot of discussion about 'culture' and being 'cultural', in real terms to everyday life and learning is it a significant element in the Information and Learning Society?

yes because it will allow people to appreciate art no matter where they come from or how old they are. It gives them the opportunity to form their own opinions in a non-pressured environment and they can look at a variety of material thus enhancing their knowledge of the art world

Step 4

8.2.1.2: Visual Art, Learning and Social Function

Visual art as a source of social information and learning, offers an understanding of the world through images. During the research the theme '*art helps make sense of the world*' emerged from insights into the utility and purposes the respondents conferred on DVA.

Respondents suggested that visual art places 'things' into new contexts and stimulates thinking, escapism and expression about the immediate world they live in as demonstrated in the two extracts below.

"Off course it helps in the processes of long life learning. Art is a very important thing in life. Art puts things into new contexts and therefore makes us think about the world around us" (Focus Group, Respondent 16)

"also important as forms of expression or comment both by the artist and the person viewing them
(Respondent 3, Case Study One)

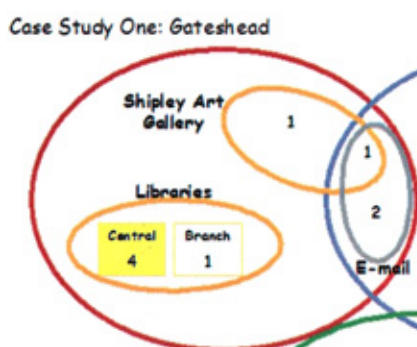
(Researcher's Emphasis)

Gadamar's (1986) concern with the experience of art and its 'living relationship' between the viewer and the work, at the viewer's particular moment in time suggests a meaning or message that is still relevant. Capturing visual art in an electronic format re-defines Gadamer's concept of a...

Step 5

Appendix IX

Case Study One Respondent Vignettes



Nine respondents in the Case Study One site were interviewed. Four respondents were interviewed in the Central Library and were users of the *new space only* and not DVA and therefore were used to place in context the concept and use of *new space*. For that reason those respondents have not been included in [Chapter 7](#).

A vignette of each of those respondents is provided here.

Respondent 6

Researcher's Note: At the first meeting agreed with respondent that the Conversation would take place after the respondent's PC session, as a result the researcher indirectly observed the respondent as he searched and used the PC appearing very relaxed and fairly skilled

"I came down to the library to use the PC for the guitar I haven't got a computer me self so...if there's something I want or whatever, on the computers I come once or twice a week, always on my own.

I know the sites I'm looking for it took me a while to find them at first but then , well its whatever I learnt at school and picked up the rest as I went along, I just used sort of the keyword guitar then fender, guitar tab and just looked at the different results in MSN guitartab universe I just put in guitartab universe

Really only look for music and medical problems for me Dad. I'm looking for a couple of songs and a couple of car pages for car radios. Today I went straight to the Tab well typed in Guitar Tab but the links were When I first started I thought that would be like the ones I was using I used Yahoo search engine because it was first on the list. I've never used NE.Com.

I live in Gateshead its where I grew up where I went to school when I was a kid. There isn't any great feature where I was brought up.

I've been to Shipley when I was a kid, every now and then I take the kids to the Hancock and the Laing it was a traditional storey reading kids listened and I wandered round. I think arts getting very confused I just think don't see a lot of stuff that's up there is classed as art its not something that really interests me I know a couple of people who are artists if they had something I might look to see what they had other than that...

Well its [DVA] great for people who enjoy that look around a museum that's half way across the world with computers its great, If it was something that interested is maybe curiosity yeah if it was Rembrandt or something a couple of his paintings on the wall and you can actually go into the painting and look around

The angel is the biggest eyesore you've ever seen I've seen it but never got out the car and walked up to it and I wouldn't get out the car.

Respondent 7

Researcher's Note: At the first meeting agreed with respondent that the Conversation would take place after the respondent's PC session, as a result the researcher indirectly observed the respondent as he searched and used the PC, appearing very relaxed unresponsive to the aggressive female to his right fairly skilled.

I came to the library today, I'm looking for a job and I'm also looking to hire a camper van for a holiday. I wanted to look at pictures and it's a quicker way of getting a look at a camper van rather than sending away brochures and also I'm a bit puzzled because there are two camper van hirers by the same name giving different locations in Cumbria in magazines and I've come in here to try and find out which location its at because that the one we may well go for.

I asked my son how you use it [PC] we've got a computer but we haven't got the Internet. I've been in and I've searched the Internet for jobs and also camper vans.

It's the first time I have actually searched for jobs I have actually used the Internet briefly; I'm not the worlds most able person on the Internet. So I got lost a few times I think I found what I wanted.

I've been in before I've been in about three times, it was a bit daunting especially when you are a bit older it's something which you haven't got a clue how to do it what to look for.

I can use the computer at home I can type I am army trained at typing so I have no problem with the keyboard its just finding my way round the internet . I sort of muddled through [Internet] I could have asked but I didn't maybe its pride you know I just found what I wanted to find em myself.

I think the first time it was basically a case of find out what is on the internet come in and see what its all about you know read the papers different places. It was interesting you know I had a look at the paper the chronicle saved me some money didn't buy it that day I did find it interesting I've got to say and me son is pressing me to get the internet but I don't find enough interest on it

personally to sort of go for it but we probably will get it because he is taking a degree at University he'll probably need it so you know...

It [Internet] did give a sort of benefit of actually looking at the camper vans inside outside and what shape what size its got dimensions on as well so I know exactly what I'm looking at I would have got that information from a magazine but I wanted it today.

In sort of two months I've probably been in four times really you know if I got it for my son at home I'd probably end up I'm medically retired so I'd end up sitting at it more than I do now but not at the moment no I haven't got sufficient interest to come and have a look really. I came with me wife the first time, the first and second time we came in we sat at the same computer the wife is as clued up on it as I am. So we both sat and muddled our way through and yes expect we got information experience out of it so I don't mind we basically came in the first time the first two times to see if we were going to buy it for see what it offered yes it does offer a wide spectrum of things".

Respondent 8

I use lots of technology at work so not scared. My parents and those without skills in general only need a small introduction then can achieve anything. I don't use email any more and can't justify having a computer or Internet connection. I come here at least once a week possibly a little bit more depending on what I need to do. I've tried the other ones [in the Central library] but they are always so busy and this one [Reference section] is more or tends to be free it does get busy times.

There are two things today one I was updating my CV which I hold on a word processor on a little disc and also just want to check some employment information some possible job applications that what I was using today there are a couple of companies I'm possibly thinking of applying to you can only apply to them on line don't accept any other kind of applications I'm just getting some information on them and my girlfriend is also thinking of applying she wants to get some information so I have printed some off as well. See what happens.

[Can you remember the first time you came in and used the PCs?]

It was a while ago now they [library staff] had to show me how to do it because you have to put in an identity pass like a code number you also have to put in a pin number as well so that took me a couple of times to work out how to do it but its very straight forward apart from when you get stuck then you've got to go and get somebody else. I don't know what I'm doing you see. Primary reason for coming here, I only really use it to search for certain sites really don't see the point in paying a lot of money out just to look at those few sites. I've got friends who play games surf the net I don't I'm not into that at all. Just come in to look at specific things and then off again.

Respondent 9

"I went to college with a friend who was very good at IT and helped him and his skills and confidence developed. I prefer the space at Gateshead library had tried Newcastle the technology is better at Gateshead having IT skills adds something else to you, another string to your bow.

The Angel is a heap of rusty metal it has caused car crashes and people have been killed. It is interesting what is happening on the Quayside good what Newcastle is doing but Gateshead is a long way behind its dirty back street of Newcastle. The reference library has a great knowledge better than the other library (lending) but the technology makes it better. There is not enough space between the computers should be more personal space.

I use chat rooms it's a sharing of a mindset sharing knowledge. Looking at art would be a waste of his time here never look at NE.Com why you promoting it ? I can solve my own problems and certainly wouldn't approach Joe Public for help or the; library staff they have more important things to do then help me".

11: Bibliography

11: Bibliography

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